SHIREI YEDIDOT:
THE MUSIC OF JACK GOTTLIEB
IN CONTEMPORARY JEWISH WORSHIP

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עַל כֵּן אֲדַבֵּר בְּךָ נִכְבָּדוֹת,
וְשִׁמְךָ אֲכַבֵּד בְּשִׁירֵי יְדִידוֹת.

So Your glories I will proclaim,
and in songs of love give honor to Your Name.

–*Shir HaKavod* (Song of Glory), 12th century *piyyut* by Rabbi Judah of Regensburg
Translated by Rabbi Sir Jonathan Sacks, *The Koren Siddur*

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Introduction

In fall 2006, when I had scarcely begun my cantorial studies in Israel, a remarkable symposium on Jewish music was beginning back in the United States. "Reclaiming American Judaism's Lost Legacy: The Art of Synagogue Music" was sponsored by the American Society for Jewish Music (ASJM), Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR), The Jewish Theological Seminary (JTS), and Temples Emanu-El of New York City and Emanuel of Great Neck. These institutions sought to bring together clergy, lay leaders, and musicians for the purpose of

> reinvigorating, elevating and propagating generations of Jewish sacred music, both as a guardian of the past and as a guide for the future. Through the conference it is our hope, among other things, to help [r]evive the listening experience *per se* as a spiritually meaningful process for the worshipper….[1]

"Reclaiming," "reviving," and "reinvigorating" all imply a need to bring back something gone missing, something dying, or something subsumed. For the "Lost Legacy" organizers, this something was synagogue art music. Over the last twenty years, participatory music has become the norm in synagogues. In a recent study on what congregations want in worship, participants generally agreed, "Music should draw people in, not encourage them to be observers. Music should be woven into the fabric of the service, not showcased."[2] Yet in a world where blogging has become woven into the fabric of daily human interaction, worshippers also seek a service in which they may

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[1] "Reclaiming American Judaism's Lost Legacy: The Art of Synagogue Music," conference brochure (New York: American Society for Jewish Music, 2007).

[2] Peter S. Knobel and Daniel S. Schechter, "What Congregations Want in Worship: Perceptions from a CCAR Study," *CCAR Journal* 53 (Winter 2006): 42.

choose from among several simultaneous voices the one that speaks to them best.[3] Has the congregation's voice become so empowered that it drowns out all others? Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller has determined that "the congregation's need to sing the familiar tunes limits [cantors'] possibilities for varying the repertoire and developing a balance of expression and style in the music."[4] Rabbi Lawrence Hoffman expresses a desire "to see the cantorate challenge the community, having found its voice, to expand its sense of the sacred, in ways that only the cantorate can do."[5] He has also urged the Jewish community to "think of liturgy as our public conversation about what matters most. Think of worship as the way we do the conversing."[6] In other words, it may be that the cantor's voice has also gone missing from the conversation.

Hoffman theorizes that if the sacred conversation of contemporary Jewish worship contains priestly, prophetic, and pastoral functions, then sacred music must function with all three in mind.[7] The sacred music of Jack Gottlieb, one of the organizers of the "Lost Legacy" conference, may prove to possess each of these three functions. Gottlieb's music also typifies the kind of repertoire he and the other conference organizers hope to restore to contemporary synagogue worship. His formative experiences with Max Helfman at the Brandeis Camp Institute, combined with extensive formal training and association with prominent composers like Aaron Copland and

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[3] Lawrence Hoffman, "Post-Colonial Liturgy in the Land of the Sick," *CCAR Journal* 53 (Summer 2006): 31.

[4] Benjie Ellen Schiller, "The Cantor's Spiritual Challenge: Defining 'Agency' in Prayer," *Journal of Synagogue Music* 30 (Fall 2005): 59.

[5] Interview with Lawrence Hoffman, New York, 15 October 2009.

[6] Hoffman, "Post-Colonial," 31.

[7] Hoffman, "On Swimming Holes, Sound Pools and Expanding Canons," *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience*, edited by Lawrence Hoffman and Janet Walton (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1993), 337.

Leonard Bernstein, place Gottlieb in the elite ranks of 20th century American Jewish musicians. Along with some of his larger choral pieces, Gottlieb's two-volume anthology *Songs of Godlove* (2004), revised and annotated to reflect contemporary liturgical language and usage, represents significant Jewish music eager to be heard in the 21st century worship conversation.[8]

The keynote address of the "Lost Legacy" conference highlighted four criteria whereby one may distinguish works of significant Jewish music: 1) a sense of simultaneous time; 2) elevation of thought; 3) separation from the secular; 4) a creative midrash.[9] Such works, the conference organizers note, are "…not necessarily incompatible with congregational or participatory music."[10] On the contrary, when Jewish art songs are evaluated first by how well they perform liturgically and then by how well they are performed artistically, then they could be welcomed into today's synagogues with open arms.[11] Gottlieb's synagogue songs work in contemporary Jewish worship by making art, drama, melody, and text relevant to today's sacred communities. This thesis shows how music from throughout his career can transform the public prayer experience.

In Chapter 1, "*Petikhot*: Openings," I provide a biographical overview, drawing significantly from primary sources. In Chapter 2, "*Yom Makhamadim*: Shabbat as a Day

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[8] Jack Gottlieb, "Long Biography," http://www.jackgottlieb.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=26 (accessed 8 December 2009).

[9] Michael Isaacson, "Rethinking Worship Music on a Balanced Bimah," keynote address presented at "Reclaiming American Judaism's Lost Legacy: The Art of Synagogue Music," New York, 12 November 2006, http://www.jewishmusic-asjm.org/isaacsonspeech.html (accessed 20 June 2009).

[10] "Reclaiming American Judaism's Lost Legacy" conference brochure.

[11] Lawrence Hoffman, "On Swimming Holes, Sound Pools, and Expanding Canons," 335.

of Delights," I show how Gottlieb musically illustrates traditional Shabbat concepts of time, creation, and love in four pieces written at different stages in his career. In Chapter 3, "'unimagineable You': Relationships with the Divine," I discuss how traditional Jewish relationships with God – struggling, unifying, and interpreting – can be found both in Gottlieb's compositions and compositional process. In Chapter 4, "*Sharing the Prophets*: The More Things Change…" I look at how four selections from a forty-year old "musical encounter" can still inform and even embody today's American Jewish experience. In Chapter 5, "*Kekedem*: As at First," I examine Gottlieb's work in the context of his contemporaries, determine his influence and influences, and offer explicit suggestions for ensuring his legacy lives on, as fresh and new as it was "*kekedem*." Through analyzing several examples from Gottlieb's catalog, I reveal both its artistry and its relevance.

Amid the many refrains echoing in today's Reform prayer spaces, Gottlieb's deserves to be heard in its own right.[12] His gifts for oratory, poetry and prose, evident in lectures, original lyrics, and many scholarly works, are as manifest as his musicality. This study reclaims a musical life for the contemporary American synagogue, for Jack Gottlieb represents a legacy that may not be so lost after all.

[12] "Not only is it impossible for the postmodern composer to speak for humanity, he cannot even speak for the Jews. All he can do is speak for himself." David M. Schiller, *Bloch, Schoenberg, and Bernstein: Assimilating Jewish Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 174.

Chapter 1

"*Petikhot*": Openings

"I was born on Columbus Day [1930]…and there was always a parade in my neighborhood, and I thought it was for me on my birthday…"[13]

Gottlieb has seen many successes and challenges throughout his career. Like all composers, he has desired acknowledgment of his achievements. He has also sought to be generous and humble, working to raise the status of his art, rarely using his professional relationships for personal gain. As his friend Dr. Philip Miller puts it, "I find it interesting...that he's getting so much recognition in his old age. He's been…a person seeking acceptance, hoping for acceptance and praise."[14] In this chapter, I provide an overview of Gottlieb's life, drawing significantly from primary sources, in an attempt to ascertain the origin of these feelings.

Being the youngest of three children born to immigrant parents in New Rochelle, New York, maybe a nascent need for attention instilled itself in him from the very start. Gottlieb recalls that his search for personal identity began in a much earlier and fundamental way than it did for most children. It began with the search for a name:

> I didn't like Jacob when I was growing up – it made me uncomfortable. I thought it was "too Jewish," and so everybody called me Jack or Jackie or Yankl at the time. And when I was about 7 or 8 years old, my father had to apply for Social

[13] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.
[14] Interview with Philip Miller, New York, 4 May 2010.

> Security benefits, and we found out that my birth certificate said that my name was Henry! Go figure that out. And at that time I had Jacob changed to Jack; it is a decision I have come to regret with much sorrow over the years.[15]

He was hardly the first Jacob to receive a new name. In 1930s America, it was a common occurrence for assimilating Jews to choose less Jewish-sounding names for themselves. To do so at as young an age as Gottlieb's was probably not so common. Perhaps his regret stems from the fact that he did and still does consider himself a proud Jew, whose Jewishness came to be an important part of his life. Indeed, he remained "Ya'akov" at the synagogue and "Yankl" at home, where his family sang and played Yiddish songs on piano, mandolin and violin, where he soon joined them on the clarinet. But Gottlieb's early musical influences extended far beyond the house in New Rochelle, thanks what he heard on the radio:

> This was during the days of the warfare – that's what we used to consider it – between Frank Sinatra and Bing Crosby…. You either were a Sinatra fan or a Crosby fan, and never the twain would meet…. I liked them both.[16]

Music was merely an avocation for the young Gottlieb, something to tune into periodically, something to make just for fun. It was similar in that regard to his Judaism which, although he affirmed by going to Orthodox Hebrew school, becoming bar mitzvah and participating in Young Judaea activities, was not that important to him. Professionally, he had intended to follow in his brother David's footsteps by becoming a journalist. And then, upon taking guidance counseling tests at Isaac Young High School, "…it turned out that I was extremely high on the music curve. In fact, it was off the

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[15] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.
[16] Ibid.

charts. So that persuaded me that I had to go into music. But by then I was in my mid-teens, and that's very late to begin."[17] And Gottlieb's father and mother did not respond very warmly to their youngest son's newfound professional path,

> [My parents] weren't very encouraging about going into a musical career, and who could blame them?.... [A] musician was regarded as the "lowest of the low," a kind of beggar who comes around, at least in the East European milieu, looking for cash or some kind of food or some kind of overnight accommodation. They were itinerants, in other words. This was a conflict; my father would have preferred that I go into… at least a **paying** job, of some kind!"[18]

This traditional approach to professional musicians did not deter Gottlieb from striving to join their ranks. He taught himself to play the family piano, joined the marching band and, upon graduating from high school, began his undergraduate studies in music at Queens College, New York. Then around the mid-century mark, Gottlieb attended the Brandeis Camp Institute, first in Winterdale, PA and then in Santa Susana, CA, which he fondly recalls as "a kibbutz-like environment" that instilled "Zionist values into impressionable late teen-agers."[19] It also happened to be a training ground for the most promising, talented young Jewish artists from across America. And it was the place where Gottlieb came into his own, as a musician, and as a Jew. These newly crucial components of his identity were forged both in "*milkhik*" folk-songs around the campfire

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[17] Ibid.

[18] Ibid.

[19] "How Practical is the Practice of the Practicum?" *ACC Koleinu* 9 (March 2001), 4.

and in the "*fleyshik*" music of worship services.[20] His fellow campers included "embryo Cantors George Weinflash, Shelly Merel, Raymond Smolover and budding composers Yehudi Wyner, Charles Davidson and Gershon Kingsley." They all studied with the likes of Julius Chajes, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Heinrich Schalit, Eric Zeisel, Erwin Jospe and Solomon Rosowsky.[21]

Surrounded as he was with such formidable talents, it was inevitable that Gottlieb should feel compelled to hold up their artistic backgrounds against his own which, because of his self-professed "late blooming," was not nearly as rich. "They had a different kind of conditioning than I did growing up, and they probably were more imbued with music throughout their childhood."[22] And he had another, more private reason to compare himself with his peers.

> I'm a gay man, and I knew I was gay as a teenager. And in those days, it was not an easy thing – not that it's that much easier these days, but at least it's much more apparent and easier to cope with. Even the words, "cope with," say a lot about how I have been dealing with this issue. Now why is it an issue? Because there always was this – and these are clichés I have to deal with – the secret I had to carry around with me, secret with my family, and secret with some of my friends, not all of them, and certainly a secret in a Jewish environment.[23]

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[20] Ibid. Gottlieb notes, "Never, never were they combined. One does not mix meat with dairy." This aesthetic distinction he was taught as a youngster colored his conception of worship music for years to come.

[21] The impact of the Brandeis Camp Institute, with its mixture of so many leading figures of 20th century Jewish music, deserves study in its own right.

[22] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

[23] Ibid. Gay Jewish composers of the 20th century are also surely deserving of future study.

The theme of being an outsider looking in pervades Gottlieb's professional and personal lives. But in spite of his sexual orientation and slim musical resume, he was embraced in his experience at the Brandeis Camp Institute, a core reason for why he embraced Jewish music in return.

Of all the figures he encountered there, none were more welcoming or more influential to him than the Institute's music director, Max Helfman.[24] Gottlieb remembers "He had such an incredible charisma that he could persuade people, just by sitting and talking with them. The way he talked was musical."[25] Indeed, Helfman was the one who encouraged Gottlieb to write synagogue songs, and Gottlieb soon became his personal assistant, editing and transcribing his scores and getting to know his music intimately.[26] He describes it as:

> very theatrical, very dramatic, uses high sopranos and lots of fortes and lots of very quiet moments, lots of contrasts. That was very influential to me. He paid attention to the text. Too much of the music that I came to learn is the traditional music in synagogue context seems to be interchangeable, that one piece of music could use a different text all the time, and I always fought against that. Text comes first."[27]

Helfman may have been the first composer who made such an tremendous impact on Gottlieb, but he was certainly not the last. While at the Tanglewood Music Festival in the summer of 1952, a fellow Queens College student introduced Gottlieb to Leonard

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Even after Helfman's death, Gottlieb remained involved with his music, eventually publishing editions of *Ahavat Olam* and *Kedusha* (New York: Transcontinental Music, 1975).

[27] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

Bernstein. "Like most people, I did my level best to act casual in the presence of celebrity. He was warm, gracious, and immediately one could tell that when he spoke to you he gave you his full attention."[28] When Gottlieb began a master's degree in composition at Brandeis University in 1954, Bernstein was among his instructors. And in the summer of 1955, Bernstein engaged Gottlieb's services as his assistant while presiding over a panel at the Hollywood Bowl Festival of Americas. Gottlieb formally began working with Bernstein in 1958, shortly after the latter was named music director of the New York Philharmonic. During this time, Gottlieb completed doctoral studies in composition at the University of Illinois, where he wrote a dissertation entitled "The Music of Leonard Bernstein: A Study of Melodic Manipulations," the first of its kind. He also began keeping records of his time with the maestro (which ultimately formed the first half of his 2010 memoir *Working with Bernstein*) and continued writing about Bernstein's music in countless program notes, score prefaces, and periodicals long after leaving the maestro's employ.

Sufficed to say, Bernstein's impression on Gottlieb, both as a musician and as a Jew, was positively indelible. Even sixty years after their first encounter, Gottlieb admits, "I remain smitten with his work. It is so imbued with Americanism and with Jewish-ism. I always question, am I dealing with an American Jew or a Jewish American? And I love that mixture, one direction or the other."[29] In recounting Bernstein's relationship with his father – specifically regarding the son becoming a professional musician – Gottlieb is

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[28] Jack Gottlieb, "New York, New York," *Working with Bernstein* (New York: Amadeus Press, 2010), 19.

[29] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

implicitly comparing his own parents' take on their son's career path. "It was this Jewish legacy that helped shape and solidify the bond between Bernstein and myself."[30]

Yet as he establishes a legacy of his own, Gottlieb finds that their bond has become a burden. He worries that to the extent he is known at all to the world at large, it is always in connection to Bernstein, to the detriment of his own independent work. "It's very much a conflict," he confesses, "and I don't want to sound like I'm feeling so sorry for myself, but I fear that if I do get my obituary, it will be 'Leonard Bernstein's Right-Hand Man, Died at Age Whatever.'"[31] And Gottlieb recognizes that from the perspective of the scholarly Jewish musical community, he cannot evade the inevitable comparisons of his composing style to Bernstein's,

> Can I say that it's melodic or that it sounds American or that it doesn't sound like anybody else…. Too often [my music has] been compared to [Bernstein's music], and not the other way around. Does it make it unique? I enjoy syncopated rhythms – I wish there were more fast music in my catalog, in the liturgical end of it…. I use 7, 9, 13 chords; I try to find unusual spacings. Is that like Bernstein? I'm not sure."[32]

In comparing Bernstein's output to Gottlieb's (and not the other way around), one striking difference is in scale: Bernstein's preferred instrumentation is for orchestra, while Gottlieb's, with a few exceptions, is for voices and keyboard. Another difference is in influence: Bernstein's works largely reflect his early classical training, while Gottlieb's

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[30] "Introduction: A Jewish American or an American Jew?" *Working with Bernstein,* 4.

[31] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

[32] Ibid.

largely reflect his early and abiding love of popular American song.[33] And, perhaps most crucially, most of Bernstein's compositions are to be performed in concert, while most of Gottlieb's compositions are to be offered in worship. The point, although seemingly obvious, cannot be emphasized enough, for it makes a distinction between the two composers' purposes and a platform upon which this study is founded.

By 1966, Gottlieb had found the need to distinguish himself from his boss, and left Bernstein so as to concentrate exclusively on composing. He had laid the groundwork for his budding career in 1960 with his prize-winning cantata *In Memory Of…*, first performed at New York's Park Avenue Synagogue, where his mentor Max Helfman had often appeared. That same congregation also hosted the 1965 premiere of *Love Songs for the Sabbath*, selections from which will be discussed in Chapter 2. Having his works performed at such a high-profile Jewish institution gave Gottlieb both the opportunity and the publicity to start pushing the boundaries of liturgical music.[34]

According to Gottlieb's website, "In 1967 his sacred service, *Love Songs for the Sabbath*, was given at the College of Saint Catherine in Saint Paul, Minnesota, probably the first time a full-length synagogue service was ever heard under Catholic auspices."[35] He recalls,

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[33] Interestingly, Gottlieb once suggested he and his contemporaries should "…strive for the *essence* of popular song, not its actual substance." "Some Thoughts About the Future, On the Occasion of the One and a Half Jubilee Year of Eric Werner." *Shalshelet* 2 (1976).

[34] "Outline for 'A JOYLESS NOISE? A Book on Contemporary Jewish Music,'" manuscript, 1970.

[35] "Long Biography," http://www.jackgottlieb.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=14&Itemid=26 (accessed 8 December 2009).

> This came about because the summer before [1966], I had taught [Jewish music]… to nuns and priests at Loyola University in New Orleans, and one of the sisters, Sister Lucina, who was a stern but very musical lady, decided to do this music of mine during the college year the following year. It was quite thrilling, because whatever conceptions these Catholic youngsters had about Jews, I think it greatly influenced or changed their minds, and exposed them to something that they would have never received otherwise.[36]

If Gottlieb's experience at Brandeis Camp Institute first crystallized his identity as a Jewish musician, then his experience at Loyola University –ironically, perhaps – helped grow it exponentially. The mid-1960s, at the height of the civil rights movement and in the wake of the Second Vatican Council, was a time for finding common ground in both civil and sacred spheres. Gottlieb's focus turned toward interfaith relations. In a letter to the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), he wrote

> As a composer, I firmly believe that involvement with religious music other than my own faith helps to illuminate and enhance my own craft. One is forced by circumstance to investigate the primary source-materials of his religious persuasion, and there are lessons to be learned by emulation and imitation of other practices.[37]

Gottlieb's experience working with Catholics inspired the composition of *Shout for Joy* (1967) and prompted him to envision a new Jewish service, "an antiphonal service with 2 choirs, 2 cantors, with tape-recorded voices coming from various parts of the sanctuary,

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[36] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

[37] "A Position Paper by Jack Gottlieb," letter to American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, 1970.

and with *genuine* participation of the Congregation."[38] Determining that Catholic, Protestant and Jewish liturgical conventions had "not kept pace with world change," he even proposed a "School of Sacred Music for all faiths,"

> out of the conviction that methodology (i.e. ways and means) can be improved and enhanced by the mutual exposure of these religious traditions to each other; that change is less likely to occur in continued maintenance of exclusive inbred teaching; and that wide-open intermingling on the University level is bound to affect liturgical practice on the Community level."[39]

Although Gottlieb's interfaith School of Sacred Music did not live to see the light of day, his innovative liturgical ideas were consistent with the generational universalism of the 1960s and helped attract him to the board of Temple Israel in Saint Louis, Missouri, which hired him as Music Director in 1970.[40] His tenure there was brief but fruitful, yielding both *New Year's Service for Young People* (1970) and *Three Candle Blessings* (1970) in his first year. Gottlieb also helped found the Saint Louis Circle of Jewish Music, a cross-denominational group of cantors, music directors, and others dedicated to performing and promoting Jewish music in that region. Yet he had difficulty negotiating synagogue politics, his relationship with the rabbi, and including worship music that would please the masses if not his own artistic sensibilities, which had been honed over years of post-graduate work and traveling the world with the New York

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[38] "Sermon Talk," delivered at Temple Sinai, New Orleans, 1966. To date, this service has not yet been composed.

[39] "Proposal for Sacred Music School," manuscript, 1966.

[40] Gottlieb describes Bernstein's contribution to interfaith compositions in "A Jewish Mass or a Catholic Mitzvah?" *Working for Bernstein* (New York: Amadeus Press, 2010), 133-137.

Philharmonic.[41] Moreover, his growing reputation in the Jewish musical scene had attracted the attention of Alfred Gottschalk, two years into his presidency of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR). And so in 1973, Gottlieb moved back to New York to become composer-in-residence and first full-time professor at the HUC-JIR School of Sacred Music.

Gottlieb had many responsibilities on the faculty of HUC-JIR. Among them were teaching music classes, conducting the choir, coordinating the popular *Musica Hebraica* concert series, and facilitating the worship music at chapel services, which changed dramatically due to his efforts.[42] He also wrote many liturgical settings in what was perhaps the most prolific period of his composing career, including several songs expressly for the world's first-ever female cantorial students.[43] But again, the politics proved too much for him. As one former colleague recalls, "His years here were not happy. He had trouble with the students. They didn't relate to him, and vice versa…."[44] Another remembers him as "a fish out of water…. He was purely engaged in the music part of it, not the prayer part of it..."[45]

To be sure, Gottlieb was new to the Reform Jewish world, and had arrived in it more out of profession than predilection. He was not, by nature, a synagogue-going Jew. His formative religious experiences were largely in traditional circles: in the *shtibl*, in Young Judaea, and especially at the Brandeis Camp Institute. As a musician, he was

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[41] Gottlieb explains the need to feature "first-rate" synagogue music above all other kinds in "The Chicken Soup Approach to Jewish Music," manuscript, delivered at Temple Israel, Saint Louis, 1973.

[42] Interview with Barbara Ostfeld, New York, 1 December 2010.

[43] For a complete list of Gottlieb's synagogue and Jewish-inspired works, see Appendix D.

[44] Interview with Philip Miller.

[45] Interview with Lawrence Hoffman, New York, 15 October 2009.

accustomed to high standards. And the rising popularity of the folk genre in Reform services had begun to disturb him greatly, since he found it to be incompatible with the more dignified worship aesthetic he had learned from Max Helfman.[46] Gottlieb was apparently relentless in his pursuit of artistic excellence both at the Temple and at the College-Institute, but others were reticent to join him. Over the course of the 1970s, he realized that Reform Jewish institutional life was a far cry from the elite musical communities of his earlier years.[47]

Thus Gottlieb returned to the Leonard Bernstein Office, eventually becoming its senior consultant, and with whose cooperation he published *Working With Bernstein*, among other scholarly works. His principal compositional interests shifted towards cabaret songs, musical theater and iconic films, yet he remained connected to the Jewish musical scene. He appeared at ACC gatherings and in lecture-demonstrations, researched and wrote *Funny, it Doesn't Sound Jewish* (2004), served as long-time president of the American Society for Jewish Music, and continued taking synagogue commissions. To date, two records of his sacred music have been produced: *Evening, Morning, and Noon* (1991) and his self-titled volume in the Naxos/Milken Archive catalog (2004). Gottlieb has received many honors for his life's work and special recognition on his significant birthdays, all in New York. For his 50th birthday in 1980, a full concert of his works was programmed at Merkin Concert Hall, with Bernstein among the performers.[48] For his 70th

[46] At the Brandeis Camp Institute, he says, "…we knew how to make a separation between the two – that is, the secular and the sacred." Interview, 5 April 2010.

[47] Gottlieb has given much thought to the dichotomy of elite/popular, especially in American music. See "Afterword—Society and Musical Politics," *Funny, it Doesn't Sound Jewish* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 224-230.

[48] Gottlieb's 60th birthday in 1990 fell while Bernstein was on his deathbed, presumably leaving little occasion for celebration.

birthday in 2000, then-cantorial students Adina Frydman and Kim Harris presented a practicum of his sacred music at HUC-JIR. For his 75th birthday in 2005, Central Synagogue produced a concert that featured premieres of *Two Nigunim for Two-Part Singing* and *In the Palace of Time*. And in 2010-2011, his 80th birthday year, Gottlieb participated in a wide array of activities throughout the Northeast, including his return to HUC-JIR for the recital component of this project.[49]

As can be gleaned from this biographical overview, there can be little doubt that Gottlieb's musical upbringing has had an indelible impact on his professional career. His time spent in the high artistic ranks of the Brandeis Camp Institute, Bernstein's employ, and higher musical education differed sharply from his short stints in synagogue and seminary. Despite his best efforts to be collegial, Gottlieb's experiences with the musical elite and the exacting standards he cultivated with them only seemed to have exacerbated his "outsider" status among institutional Jews, even among fellow synagogue musicians:

> In the past, it disturbed me to be told that I was only "out for myself," that I was insensitive to the needs of other composers who might not have had the same forum I have had for exposure. I felt truly put down by such criticism with the result that I tried to retrench and do my best to have my music performed minimally, if at all.[50]

Some who lacked the same set of professional opportunities or personal challenges may have had trouble relating to this first-generation Jew from New Rochelle. But setting aside issues of personality and politicking, anyone could relate to the excitement a young

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[49] See Appendix E for the recital program.

[50] "The Politics of Being a Composer," manuscript, delivered at the ACC Mid-Winter Conclave, 1977.

man felt upon realizing a simple musical phenomenon, "I remember the day I understood what a common tone was in harmony, in chords. That was so thrilling to me – it was like finding the greatest solution to a crossword puzzle…. It was like a breakthrough."[51] This is the side of Jack Gottlieb that is most vividly expressed through his sacred music: the breakthrough, the thrill, the sheer pleasure of understanding. In the ensuing chapters of this study, I make Gottlieb's synagogue songs not only understandable, but pleasing, and even thrilling, for all who have just discovered them and for all who would be open to them anew.

[51] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

Chapter 2

"*Yom Makhamadim*": Shabbat as a Day of Delights

On a 1950 Friday night at the Brandeis Camp Institute, "…it was very Oneg Shabbat, all the boys and girls dressed in white, very homey, very sweet."[52]

Jack Gottlieb's seminal summer camp experience occurred just a year before Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel's released his classic work, *The Sabbath*, forever having an impact on the composer. Heschel's concepts as well as the experience of Shabbat at the Brandeis Camp Institute made a lasting impression on Gottlieb as a composer. Indeed, two major works, respectively written earlier and later in the composer's career, take their titles from *The Sabbath*. The title of the 1965 concert-service *Love Songs for Sabbath* derives from Heschel's observation, "The Jewish contribution to the idea of love is the conception of love of the Sabbath..."[53] The 2005 work *In the Palace of Time* owes its title to Heschel's conception of Shabbat as "…a palace in time which we build."[54] Such language naturally lends itself to inspiration, as Heschel writes, "Creation is the language of God, Time is His Song, and things of space the consonants in the song."[55] Gottlieb demonstrates his proficiency in these ideas throughout *Love Songs for Sabbath*, particularly in "*L'chah Dodi*" and "Cantillation Chorale," as well as in two later works, "Candle Blessing No. 1" (1970) and "*M'nuchah V'simchah"* (2005). This chapter will

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[52] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 9 November 2009.

[53] Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 1951), 16.

[54] Ibid., 15.

[55] Ibid., 101.

show how he musically illustrates the concepts of time, creation, and love in these pieces, all written at different stages in his career.

To Jack Gottlieb, sanctified time is time spent building pieces, coaxing melody out of mere notes, and writing music faithful to the text. If composition is a labor of love, then performance is an occasion for celebrating, for remembering how a song came to be, for reliving the creative process all over again. From the composer's perspective, then, one can think of a performance as an anniversary of its inception. In a similar way, Jewish mystics, Heschel among them, have long thought of Shabbat as a weekly wedding between God and Israel or God and Shabbat. It becomes a regular renewing of vows, a chance to re-examine and reflect, a day ushered in with kindled lights and full of delight thereafter. For nearly fifty years, this feeling of delight has permeated much of Jack Gottlieb's Shabbat music, and has only increased in the face of all the composer's revisions to his works.

Love Songs for the Sabbath (Shirei Ahava L'Shabbat): A Friday Evening Service Celebrating the Holiness of Time was commissioned by Cantor David Putterman of Park Avenue Synagogue as part of that congregation's commitment to promoting new synagogue art music.[59] With the service's premiere in May 1965, Gottlieb joined the roster of distinguished 20th century Jewish composers who had also received commissions from the synagogue, such as Leonard Bernstein, David Diamond, Jacob Druckman, Morton Gould, Roy Harris, Darius Milhaud, Lukas Foss, and Kurt Weill. It was the young composer's first major work, and he dedicated it to Max Helfman, who had died in 1963. Despite Putterman's insistence that "a service is not a concert," perhaps

it was for the sake of honoring his mentor that Gottlieb "was not about to be dissuaded" from the prospect of writing a concert-service equal in dimension to those written for the church.[60] Nor was he the first composer to rise to such a challenge; his old Brandeis campmate Yehudi Wyner wrote a musically complex *Friday Evening Service* two years prior for Park Avenue, and both men's services followed in the wake of Ernest Bloch's famous *Avodath Hakodesh* from the early 1930s.

As it turned out, the complexity of Gottlieb's *Love Songs* required extra rehearsals to ensure a successful premiere. On the night of the premiere, sitting in the congregation was none other the Yiddish theatre personality Shalom Secunda, who reviewed the service for *The Jewish Daily Forward*,

> The more I heard, the more overwhelmed I was by the young composer's talents and his dramatic music and all the more forgot where I was: in a synagogue, or in an opera house? In comparison with the other presentations of the Park Avenue Synagogue, the Gottlieb service is a great achievement and success… this time the music was *ekht* [genuine] and by a gifted composer.[61]

While Secunda thought a great deal of the concert, he apparently did not think much of the service, going on in his review to deem the work "not worthy for worship." Indeed, a survey of the liturgical settings in *Love Songs* reveals music of extraordinary complexity for cantor, choir, and organ, even by mid-20th century synagogue music standards, and

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[60] Liner notes for Jack Gottlieb's *Love Songs for the Sabbath; Three Candle Blessings; Psalmistry*; Tovah Feldshuh, reader; Choir of Texas Tech University; Carolina Chamber Chorale; The Southern Chorale and Jazz Ensemble; Kenneth Davis and Timothy Koch, conductors; Milken Archive/Naxos 8.559433, 2004, 1 compact disc.

[61] Ibid.

which requires considerable effort from those who perform it – contrary, perhaps, to the notion of the Sabbath as an occasion to rest from creative work!

Yet "remembering the work of creation" actually resonates quite well with Gottlieb's compositional philosophy – namely, that of reworking creations. Performance practices, instrumentation choices, changing liturgical texts, and gendered language have all been occasions for revising his works. No matter what the particular consideration may be, he notes, "I cannot think of a single large work of mine that has not needed revisions."[62] This approach towards the writing process recalls that of another composer – namely, Max Helfman.[63] It also recalls Heschel's special approach towards Shabbat, "…to observe is to celebrate the creation of the world and to create the seventh day all over again."[64]

Thus Gottlieb later revised *Love Songs for the Sabbath*, upon the advice of another Helfman acolyte, Cantor Raymond Smolover, to include readings (some of which are taken directly from Heschel), percussion, and even dancing, to make it consistent with evolving worship styles of the late 1960s. While the core musical liturgy of the service remained the same as the one Putterman commissioned for his flagship Conservative synagogue, all the revisions Smolover suggested – the readings, percussion parts, and dancing – were ostensibly for the sake of Reform communities. Indeed, the revised service was premiered in May 1966 at the JCC of White Plains, NY, and later that summer at the UAHC Kutz Camp in Warwick, NY. And as has already been discussed in

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[62] "Foreword," ibid.

[63] Helfman "…loved composing and enjoyed the emotional delight of musical creation, yet the final release into public domain somehow frightened him." Philip Moddel, *Max Helfman: A Biographical Sketch* (Berkeley, CA: Judah L. Magnes Memorial Museum/The Jewish Museum of the West, 1974), 85.

[64] Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 19.

Chapter 1, the revised version of *Love Songs for the Sabbath* made interfaith history with later performances under Catholic and Episcopalian auspices.

Something unique in the service drew attention to different faith traditions. The observance of a day of rest is certainly common to many religions. Yet perhaps it is Gottlieb's specific understanding of the seventh day, under the influence of Heschel, which made *Love Songs* so appealing to Christian audiences. What may set it apart from other Shabbat services, ironically, is the very Jewish notion that "The Sabbath is a bride, and its celebration is like a wedding."[65] One component of the Friday evening liturgy demonstrates that notion quite plainly. As Heschel points out, "The idea of the Sabbath as a bride was retained by Israel; it is the theme of the hymn *Lechah Dodi* chanted in the synagogue."[66] And Gottlieb's setting of "*L'chah Dodi*"[67] brings the traditional Jewish wedding imagery to the foreground.

Gottlieb's "*L'chah Dodi*" melodically demonstrates his understanding of Shabbat as a marriage between God and Israel, two partners musically united, as it were, by a single note. Organ, harp, and various percussion instruments accompany cantor and choir, all coming together around a lilting refrain set between five verses of the *piyyut*, each in a radically different key area. The single note which unites the piece throughout the various key areas turns out to be a D-natural, first introduced, fittingly, on the words welcoming the bride, "*likrat kallah."*

The cantor introduces the refrain in A-flat over a pedal tone of E-flat in the organ. The D-natural on "*kallah*" thus represents a brief foray into the Lydian mode, evoking a

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[65] Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 54.

[66] Ibid., 61.

[67] For consistency, I preserve Gottlieb's unique transliteration of the title. See Appendix A, Example #1.

sense of the ethereal. The tenors and sopranos respond to the cantor's call beginning in measure 11 by repeating the refrain in canon, one measure apart, and each departing from the theme in different chromatic directions. Such departures mark the end of each refrain and allow for the excursions to different key areas. The sopranos' D-natural in measure 16, once an augmented 4^{th} in the tonic, travels down the staves in the next three measures and by measure 20 becomes the leading tone into E-flat, the key area for the first verse.

The cantor sings "*Shamor vezakhor…*" with an organ accompaniment that, while ostensibly remaining in E-flat, features a dissonant pedal point in virtually every measure. In fact, the organ pedal and cantor are in unison only twice in this verse: measure 28, on that omnipresent D-natural, and measure 32, on a B-flat. The cantor's words in those measures can hardly be coincidental: first "*ha-meyukhad*" ("unique") and then "*ekhad*" ("one"). When the choir begins the refrain in measure 37 (back in A-flat), first men and then women, the organ texture changes from mostly quarter notes to mostly eighth notes, providing more forward motion to the words. Although the voices again diverge chromatically in their canon, they end the refrain in a unison B-flat at the downbeat of measure 45. The organ responds in contrary motion on the way to E-flat minor for the beginning of the next verse.

Gottlieb instructs the cantor to "fervently" sing "*Mikdash melekh…*" while the organ's fervency is evident in the appoggiaturas on each downbeat. This expression is undoubtedly tied to measure 52's "*ha-hafeikhah*" ("the upheaval"). The still, small D-natural appears once in measure 48 in both voice and organ with the word "*melekh*" (briefly alluding to the notion of a "royal shrine"), but asserts itself in measure 53 with a sudden key change to B-minor, acknowledging this verse's traditional modal contrast.

While the organ descends stepwise for the next four bars, reflecting "*emek habakhah"* ("valley of tears"), the cantor counters with three successive leaps in fifths: D-A, F#-C#, A-E, outlining a D-major triad and by measure 56 giving assurance of God's abundant mercy ("*vehu yakhamol alayikh khemlah*") in and around the D-natural. The women's voices then begin the refrain (for the first time), now in A-major and with the unmistakable, dissonant D-natural present in the organ through measures 59-60. The men enter a measure later, and the organ pedal a measure after that, making the refrain into a three-part canon. The organ and men's voices end on an open E chord, setting up the key of E-minor for the next verse, "*Hit'oreri, hit'oreri…*" ("Awake, awake").

Despite increasing the tempo, Gottlieb sets this verse in a decidedly understated manner. The sense of urgency is palpable in the organ's offbeat appoggiaturas for the first four measures, and also in the shift up to G-minor in measure 73. The cantor's exhortations of *"kumi," "uri,*" and *"shir dabeiri"* ("Arise," "Shine," "Utter a song") are all on the D-natural, as is the verse's final word, *"niglah"* ("revealed"). The note that has appeared up to now as something fleeting, dischordant, and seemingly irrelevant is now fixed, consonant, and revelatory. As the men's voices return to the fore and begin the refrain in G-major, D-natural becomes a literally "dominating" sonority, leading up to the piece's peak, "*Vehayu limeshisah shosayikh…*" ("Shunned are all who would shun you…"), in the key of D-minor.

At last, Gottlieb gives the choir a verse, and instructs them to sing it "heavy, marked" in the pickup to measure 91. He sets the opening words in loud, homophonic pronouncement, with the organ responding in similar fashion augmented by maracas. Both phrases in this section begin in a firm D-minor and end in a triumphant D-major,

travelling through a now-foreign-sounding A-flat major (indeed, the sonority comes on the words "*shosayikh*" ["your shunners"] and "*rakhaku"* ["distanced"]). Gottlieb makes his most important point in the choir's ensuing fugue in B-flat, beginning in measure 99 with the tenors singing the words "*yasis alayikh elohayikh"* ("The joy of your God shines upon you"). The altos enter two bars later in the expected dominant of F, but the basses, rather than return to the tonic, announce their rendition of the subject in D-major (along with a D pedal tone in the organ), and the sopranos two bars later in C#! The fugue reaches its apex with rich, sustained B-flat homophony at measure 111, "*kimsos khatan al kallah"* ("like the joy of a groom and a bride"), while the organ adorns the moment with triplets left over from the fugal subject. The choir suddenly becomes the wedding couple, now in G-major with the men cooing "*khatan*" to the women's "*al kallah*." The cantor enters for the first time in this verse at measure 118, like the officiant beneath a chuppah, singing a melismatic "*khatan al kallah*" (on a D-natural, of course), as if it were the end of the *Sheva B'rakhot*. Gottlieb uses this unique moment of liturgical intertextuality to transport all assembled to another place, and in so doing heeds Heschel's call to make Shabbat "a palace in time." Only when the women bring back the refrain at measure 120 (now in the key of B-flat) are we brought back to a Friday night in the synagogue. For the third time in a row, the organ pedal acts as the third voice in the canon, and the descending eighths figure in measures 129-132 grounds everyone firmly in F-major.

The final verse of *"Bo'i veshalom…"*("Enter in peace…"), beginning at measure 133, acts as a coda to the entire piece. Gottlieb gives the chorus a few bars of homophonic incantation; the sopranos' D-flat appoggiatura in particular acts as a summoning device for the cantor to enter (for the first time in the piece, the cantor, choir

and organ are now participating in a verse at the same instance). At measure 136, the sopranos now take over the organ's descending eighths figure on the word "*ateret*" ("crown") with an octave leap on D-naturals, and at measure 137 the introduction of a C# in the cantor and alto lines begins pulling the entire ensemble's key area down a half-step. The basses' four-measure pedal tone of B beginning in measure 138 sets up E major for the next four bars, until the sopranos' D-natural on "*am*" ("people") in measure 144 announces another shift in key area, perhaps the most striking one yet. After what looks like a half-cadence in B at measure 145, the cantor pulls the piece down another half-step into E-flat with the words "*Bo'i khallah*" ("Come, bride"), playing on the enharmonic nature of D#/E-flat. At this magical, mystical moment (which Gottlieb marks *meno mosso ancora*), we can almost imagine the bride pulling back her veil to reveal the very face of Shabbat. The chorus' final refrain, back in the original key area of A-flat, is the most hushed and wondrous yet, with only a single voice meant to sing in the soprano, tenor, and bass lines. Although the canon still contains moments of dissonance, as in measures 158-159, they are fleeting, for resolution is near. The voices' final iterations of the D-natural tone establish it as the leading tone, ultimately leading the piece to end, fittingly, in E-flat.

Gottlieb's main artistic objective in "*L'chah Dodi*" seems to be an expansion of the mystical God/Shabbat wedding imagery first suggested by "*likrat kallah*." Another allusion to familial love lies on a very personal level for the composer, as "*L'chah Dodi*" was the only piece of his that his father heard before his death.[68] These meta-considerations, along with complexity of musical language, make the piece a microcosm

[68] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

for *Love Songs for Sabbath* as a whole: moving and poignant to the concert-goer, but challenging and maybe even a bit foreboding to the Jew in the pew. Understanding the setting's compositional inception and pinpointing its salient musico-philosophical features are but the first steps towards making it accessible to worshippers and a functional part of a contemporary Friday night service. The next steps must involve considering the particular occasion (i.e., why on **this** Shabbat?); amassing the necessary performance forces; planning adequate rehearsal time; and framing the piece appropriately, perhaps using communal singing, responsive reading, or a thoughtful spoken introduction. In any case, the potential for this "*L'chah Dodi*" in today's synagogue worship seems to be limited only by service leaders' creativity.

In contrast to "*L'chah Dodi*," Gottlieb's "Cantillation Chorale" [69] is a startlingly simple creation from later in *Love Songs for the Sabbath*: a nine-measure, wordless, unaccompanied SATB setting inspired by Eastern European Torah cantillation and which functions as a moment of repose in the midst of the larger work. Although one would be hard-pressed to locate a Biblical verse containing the exact combination of tropes Gottlieb gives to the sopranos' melody, it may be spelled as follows:

Bar:	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Trope:	*mapakh*	*pashta*	*tipkha*	*t'vir*	*munakh*	*revi'i*	*tipkha*	*merkha*	*sof 'aliyah*

For whatever cantillation rules Gottlieb breaks here,[70] he makes up for them with his conservative approaches to harmonization and part-writing. The key area shifts predictably between F and its relative D-minor, and sopranos and basses frequently travel

[69] See Appendix A, Example #2.

[70] In Torah cantillation, *mapakh* and *pashta* always precede *zakef-katon*, and *tipkha* must be followed by either *etnakhta* or *sof pasuk*.

in contrary motion. A lovely canonical moment occurs in measure 6 between the sopranos' "*revi'i*" and the tenors' imitation one measure later in their own octave. Gottlieb even gives the altos a taste of traditional Jewish *nussakh* with a nod to the "*Yishtabakh*" mode in the last two measures, flatting the second scale degree for them on the way home to the D-minor tonic.[71] The whole cadence is framed in a Western classical context by way of the Neapolitan sixth.

But the genius of the "Cantillation Chorale" is not to be found in Gottlieb's combination of Eastern European motifs and Western European harmonization. The composer's true ingenuity lies in his use of the chorale as musical underlay for the spoken word, to be repeated as many times as necessary. The published octavo includes a poem by the 20th century German-French author Claire Goll to be read over the choir's *bocca chiusa*, surely one of the first-ever instances in synagogue music of the spoken word juxtaposed with humming. Such treatment speaks not only to Gottlieb's experience working with Bernstein in theater and television, but also to his evolving understanding of music's possibility in worship.

Gottlieb's understanding of music's possibility in worship informs many of his later compositions for the synagogue. In heeding Heschel's call for Jews to recreate the world each week on Shabbat, his 1970 *Three Candle Blessings* offer three distinct opportunities to "illuminate" the beginning moments of Friday evening worship. Few other settings of this liturgy existed prior to Gottlieb's contributions, perhaps owing to the immense popularity of Abraham Wolf Binder's "Kindling of the Sabbath Lights" from his 1940 service *Kabbalath Shabbath*.

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[71] "*Yishtabakh*" mode is also known as "*lernshtayger*," or study mode, in which rabbinic texts are traditionally chanted.

The broad structure of Gottlieb's "Candle Blessing No. 1"[72] mirrors Binder's setting[73]: instrumental prelude under a spoken invocation, treble solo, choral response, and instrumental postlude under a spoken benediction. But where Binder chooses the traditional-sounding Magein Avot mode, Gottlieb opts for a lush E-flat major, with sevenths and ninths throughout. Binder's melody is first introduced by an alto, Gottlieb's by a "childlike" soprano. The earlier setting exudes solemnity and stature. The later setting evokes bliss and serenity – delight through light.

Bliss and serenity, liberally translated, are the twin cores of the Friday night table song *M'nucha V'simcha*, for there are many folk settings but very few composed settings. Gottlieb's 2005 setting[74] weds rest with joy, solo with congregation, and a charming melody with a very intricate piano accompaniment. Solo and congregation eventually overlap with each other in canon, with a couple internal verses reserved for the cantor and unison choir. Per the composer's instructions, the choir may choose to branch out into four parts for an optional coda underneath the cantor's final iteration of the title text.

Employing Gottlieb's practice of reworking to his Shabbat pieces discussed above would enable even the most apparently esoteric selection to become relevant, immediate, and meaningful to 21st century synagogue-goers. It has become commonplace in many Reform communities to feature a band during worship services, creating opportunities for interludes, underscoring, and an array of musical textures. The addition of percussion instruments to *Love Songs for Sabbath* in 1966 meant finger cymbals, triangle, and

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[72] See Appendix A, Example #3.
[73] See Appendix A, Example #4.
[74] See Appendix A, Example #5. Preliminary research reveals only one other composed setting of *Menucha Vesimcha*: Max Janowski's undated manuscript arrangement of a tune by Joshua Lind.

maracas for "*L'chah Dodi*;" short of cutting a verse and refrain, it is difficult to conceive of how the piece could be further revised without comprising its compositional integrity. In contrast, the flexibility inherent to "Cantillation Chorale" means that service leaders could use it to underscore virtually any spoken reading; reciting a Biblical passage would match the music especially well.[75]

Of the two settings of the Shabbat candle blessing, Binder's and Gottlieb's, it is Binder's that is still the better known by far, thanks to its promulgation early on and its many iterations in Reform Jewish hymnals over the years. Gottlieb's setting remains available only in the context of the original *Three Candle Blessings* octavo.[76] The most recently published version of Binder's candle blessing in *Shireinu: The Complete Jewish Songbook*[77] is transposed down a minor third from the original key and stripped of all musical accompaniment and adornment save guitar chords, for such is the typical context in which it is offered in contemporary worship. Were Gottlieb's "Candle Blessing No. 1" given similar treatment, [78] it may yet prove to be similarly versatile.

The strophic nature of "*M'nucha V'simcha*" lends itself to cutting verses if necessary, and one might venture to use light hand-drumming to enhance the rhythmic pulse occasionally obscured by the piano's detailed accompaniment.[79] Although Gottlieb ultimately withdrew the larger work from which his "*M'nucha*" is derived (the decidedly Heschelian *In the Palace of Time* mentioned earlier in this chapter), that he continues to

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[75] It could also be sung in most any key appropriate to the musical context of the service. See Appendix A, Example #2a.

[76] Interestingly, Rabbi Daniel Freelander recalls that Gottlieb's setting was nearly included in the final draft of the 1987 Reform hymnal *Shaarei Shirah: Gates of Song*.

[77] See Appendix A, Example #4a.

[78] See Appendix A, Example #3a for one such treatment.

[79] See Appendix A, Example #5a.

make this single piece available speaks to its inherent possibilities for inclusion in Shabbat worship. For although the Hebrew poetry of "*M'nucha V'simcha*" may not be as familiar as that of "*L'chah Dodi*," its soubriquet for Shabbat, "*yom makhamadim*" ("day of delights"), is a fitting description for both a wedding day and a day of rest from the labors of ordinary life.

Throughout his career, Jack Gottlieb has drawn upon the traditional Shabbat themes of time, creation, and love as inspiration for several of his synagogue works. Whether in the dense, delicate intricacies of "*L'chah Dodi*," the simplicity of "Cantillation Chorale," the bliss and beauty of "Candle Blessing No. 1," or the playful joy of "*M'nucha V'simcha*," the composer has given contemporary service-goers and service leaders alike unique opportunities to enhance and sanctify musically their Friday night synagogue experiences. The Shabbat has long been seen as a regular opportunity for resting, rejoicing, reflecting, and, perhaps paradoxically, reworking: twenty-five precious hours for being more mindful, being more holy, being more like God. It is indeed as Heschel writes, "To sanctify time is to sing the vowels in unison with Him."[80]

[80] Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 101.

Chapter 3

"unimagineable You": Relationships with the Divine

"The Almighty, to me, is the creative impulse. To create something out of nothing, where there had been nothing before, is a mystery, and always shall be to me. And for me, that's the divine process."[84]

Because Abraham Joshua Heschel had such a strong influence on Jack Gottlieb's conception of the Sabbath, it should come as no surprise that Jack Gottlieb's conception of God is also highly influenced by Heschel's articulation of the same. As we read in the epilogue of *The Sabbath*, "The act of bringing the world into existence is a continuous process." God did not actually cease creating on the seventh day, but rather "…called the world into being, and that call goes on."[85] It is easy to understand how a composer can resonate with the idea of God as a continuous Creator, especially a composer like Gottlieb who values continuously revising and reworking.

But inherent to the act of composing is the struggle: the struggle for inspiration, for perfection, for recognition, not just in the artistic sense but also in a larger, almost existential sense. And here Gottlieb resonates with his Biblical namesake: Jacob, who struggles all night long with the unknown being in Genesis 32. Jacob the composer expresses gratitude that Jacob the patriarch was a "hanger-on…stubborn and a wrestler," for the composer has also wrestled with his faith and his identity.[86] How can one work as

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[84] Interview with the author, New York, 6 June 2010.
[85] Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 100.
[86] Interview with the author, New York, 5 April 2010.

music director of a synagogue where efforts go unappreciated by the clergy? How does one teach cantorial students in a challenging environment? How does one live as a gay man in the mid-twentieth century? And how does one find a unique composing voice, having spent most of a musical life working for a composer like Leonard Bernstein? These issues have also informed Jack Gottlieb's relationship with the Divine, in both expected and unexpected contexts. In this chapter, I discuss how traditional Jewish relationships with God – struggling, unifying, and interpreting – can be found both in Gottlieb's compositions and compositional process.

We can clearly hear Gottlieb struggle in his music. We can hear it especially in his accompaniments: in the surprising harmonic turns they take; in the intricacies of their chromatic lines; in the moments when the instruments are at odds with the voices. Throughout many of his liturgical settings addressed to the Divine, Gottlieb offers musical descriptions of angst, frustration, and pleading. In doing so he takes his place in a long line of composers whose output is often associated with personal travails, such as Beethoven, Schumann, Mahler, Shostakovich, and, of course, Bernstein. Each of these men's lives and works surely testify to the inherent complexity and mystery of creating something out of nothing. For if God lies in the creative process, then the process can hardly be a simple or straightforward one.

And yet, as Gottlieb says, "If you have to write it, you will write it."[87] The inspiration to compose is "…something that is like a match that you strike to light an oven, and finding that match is part of the big struggle…"[88] When the Biblical Jacob dreamed up his ladder to heaven, God tells him, "I will not let go of you as long as I have

[87] Interview with the author, New York, 5 April 2010.
[88] Interview with the author, New York, 6 June 2010.

yet to do what I have promised you."[89] And when inspiration's promise is fulfilled, when the work is ready for others to experience, how could anyone help but feel awed, beholding in it the spark of the divine?

> The fact that we live in a city of brick and mortar and cement and metal and we create these edifices, just absolutely amazes me. How did we come from mud and straw to these soaring towers?.... [They represent] the sign of creativity, of making do with what the possibilities are.[90]

Feelings of awe and gratitude pervade Gottlieb's 1998 setting of E.E. Cummings's well-known "i thank You God for most this amazing day."[91] The chromatic complexity of the music reflects not only the dense unorthodoxy of this particular poem, but also how Gottlieb himself perceives its themes.[92] Bursts of tone clusters in the piano's upper register ("a la fanfares," directs the composer in the first measure) bookend the piece with calls to awake and take in the sheer grandeur of the natural world described within. Yet even with all of an individual's capacity for experiencing, it is "with controlled ecstasy" that the singer enters, introducing a broad, buoyant melody that after three measures already spans a major 7th, an interval that proves to be a recurring element of the song as a whole. Gottlieb brings out the playfulness of Cummings's "leaping greenly spirit of trees" with chromatic appoggiaturas through measures 12 and 13, by

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[89] Genesis 28:15, translated by Elyse Frishman in *Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur* (New York: CCAR Press, 2007), 142.

[90] Interview, 6 June 2010.

[91] See Appendix A, Example #6.

[92] His teacher Aaron Copland notes that in poetic descriptive music, "…instead of literal imitation, one gets a musicopoetic transcription of a phenomenon as reflected in the composer's mind." *What to Listen for in Music*, revised ed. (New York: New American Library, 2009), 175.

which point he has also finally rooted the piece in D Major, as its opening key signature would indicate. Yet as soon as the bass line touches the low D, it leaps up a tritone on its way to G Major^{7} in measure 17, Gottlieb's tonal color of choice to describe the "blue true dream of sky." At this point, he also sets a circle-of-fifths progression in motion, travelling over the course of measures 18-21 from F-sharp minor^{7} to B^{7} to E minor^{7} to A^{7}. But instead of arriving again at a full D Major, the bass line only hints at D in first inversion at the top of a stepwise descent to E-flat minor^{7} in measure 23 (accompanying the words "which is yes," the summation of all the singer's objects of gratitude). An increasingly feverish ascent to the reprise of the tune ensues, "(i who have died am alive again today…" And in spite of the parentheses with which Cummings encloses this whole stanza, Gottlieb treats them as a full reiteration of the singer's wonderment, most notably on the word "love" in measure 34: to be sung triple-forte, over a G Major^{9} sonority played at the extremes of the piano. The bass line anticipates this climactic moment with a steady chromatic ascent over measures 32-33; the chromaticism lingers and ultimately sets up the piece's modulation to F-sharp Major in measures 38-42. From the listener's perspective, the key change comes as something of a surprise, and difficult to internalize – and yet, perhaps that is the point both poet and composer strive to make: the inadequacy of our frail, finite senses to comprehend the infinity of God, "lifted from the no of all nothing…"[93] Indeed, the bass line strives mightily over measures 46-48 to undertake another chromatic ascent, but cannot overcome the poem's climactic epithet,

[93] Arthur Green notes this concept is consistent with the mystical notion of *tzimtzum*: God turning inward to create. "The divine nothing (perhaps better 'No-thing'), so called because it had been utterly empty, without form, beyond reach, beyond description, in the moment of Creation reveals itself also to be the 'All-thing,' the source from which all being emerges and the flowing found by which all is sustained." *Seek My Face, Speak My Name* (Northvale, NJ: Jason Aronson, 1992), 60.

"unimagineable You," which Gottlieb sets at the extremes of the musicians' ranges to a nigh unimagineable chord: E minor over E-flat Major.[94] Perhaps this kind of broad bitonality is the best humans can do to express the concept divine omnipresence; similar to the heralding clash at the beginning and end of the piece, it is a wake-up call to the senses, befitting Cummings's closing verses, "(now the ears of my ears awake and now the eyes of my eyes are opened)."

It should be noted here that Jack Gottlieb did not intend for this setting to be used in worship. "i thank You God" is one of several Cummings poems from his song cycle *yes is a pleasant country*[95] and which he wrote expressly for concert performance. The complex accompaniment and musical texture of "i thank You God" require considerable preparation for those who would perform it. Certainly the non-Jewish Cummings never intended for his poem to be in a Jewish prayer book…and yet, thanks to forty years of Reform liturgical innovation, "i thank You God" found its way into *Mishkan T'filah* alongside the traditional blessing of gratitude, *"Modim anakhnu lakh."* [96] Prayer book editors have evidently felt that contemporary Jews would find Cummings's words relevant to their conception of thanksgiving. It is for the creative-minded clergy, then, to wrestle with the place of para-liturgy like this in planning worship services and determine where and when such profound texts would work, and how best they should be heard.

Wrestling with texts and trying to make them work appropriately is the preoccupation of anyone who composes songs, but Jack Gottlieb demonstrates particular

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[94] Interestingly, Leonard Bernstein uses exactly this same bitonality throughout his setting of *Hashkiveinu*.

[95] New York: Theophilous Music, 1998.

[96] "Festival T'filah," *Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur*, ed. Elyse D. Frishman (New York: CCAR Press, 2007), 487.

ingenuity in assigning different texts to his music. In reworking "*Shalom Rav*,"[97] the last of the seven Shabbat Amidah prayers he first set in the 1974 cycle *Tefilot Sheva*, Gottlieb adapted another poem found in a Reform prayer book: namely, Chaim Stern's translation of Uri Zvi Greenberg's "With My God, the Smith" as it appears in *Gates of Forgiveness*.[98] Newly renamed "The Challenge" in *Songs of Godlove, Vol. 2*, the song takes on a brooding, tortured character as the speaker directly expresses to God his frustration with their relationship: the mirror-image, as it were, of Judah HaLevi's medieval poem "*Yah Ana Emtza'akha*" ("Where might I go to find You?").

The bass line of "The Challenge" quickly establishes a restless 3+3+2 rhythmic pattern in C Major (making the time signature essentially 8/8), but the clashing major sevenths on the first two measures' downbeats indicate that there is more to this piece than just rhythm. Gottlieb uses chromaticism here as an expression of angst: try as the text and the music might, they cannot escape the realm of C Major, a key free from accidentals and whose all-encompassing tonality makes it the perfect musical metaphor, in this case, for God.

When in measure 22 the speaker vows, "I want to forsake You," Gottlieb forays briefly into A-flat Major; at "I hurt like a child once again," he even arrives at a quasi-cadence: a simple A-flat-C-E-flat triad in its closed, smallest form. "But…" the speaker continues, and the A-flat in the bass drops a whole step to create a G-flat diminished seventh: the devilish tritone at work. Sure enough, in the ensuing recapitulation, C Major sets in again, and the speaker admits, "I cannot leave / So I knock on Your door / And I

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[97] See Appendix A, Example #7.

[98] Stern omits the first two lines of Greenberg's Hebrew, and so Gottlieb omits them from his setting. In translation, they are, "Like a woman who works her wiles on me…." *Gates of Forgiveness* (New York: CCAR Press, 1993). 30.

listen for / Your 'Come on in!'" Just before the piece trails off to an unsettled end, Gottlieb adds a single phrase all his own, neither Greenberg's nor Stern's, in which he makes explicit the text of God's love letter to the speaker: "Wish you were here." Such a tortured statement about meeting God recalls part of Martin Buber's famous *I-Thou* theology, "He who goes out with his whole being to meet his *Thou* and carries to it all being that is in the world, finds Him who cannot be sought."[99] Contemporary worshippers who struggle in "going out" with their whole beings to find the divine can well relate to Gottlieb's addendum to Greenberg's poem.

Jewish textual tradition teaches that finding the divine can sometimes be a matter of looking in the most minute of places. In I Kings 19, God passes before Elijah neither in wind nor earthquake nor fire, but rather in "*kol demama daka*," classically translated as a "still, small voice." For Jack Gottlieb, the voice of a single note can serve as the unifying principle of a piece that may seem otherwise harmonically disjointed. In the case of his "*L'chah Dodi*," analyzed earlier in Chapter 2, D-natural may be heard as the one pitch that binds all the various key areas together and the one tone that is consistently set to the poetry's most critical words. Similarly, in Gottlieb's 1977 setting of *Hashkiveinu*[100], the critical pitch turns out to be B-natural and its enharmonic partner, C-flat. As the prayer unfolds, this single note, the first one to be sung, becomes the most pleading, the most prayerful, and the most closely associated with God.

Perhaps more than any other piece here analyzed, Gottlieb's *Hashkiveinu* calls most to mind his early exposure to and abiding love of twentieth century American

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[99] Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1958), 81.
[100] See Appendix A, Example #8.

popular song idioms.[101] "Circle of fifths" harmonic progressions and usage of rich sevenths and ninths permeate the piece from the very outset, making chromaticism and dissonance seem comfortable, even inevitable. Indeed, although the initial sonority of the critical B-natural is that of a Major seventh against the accompaniment's C Major, the full chord evokes a feeling of lush, sublime contentment. The melody descends a Major third to G-natural on the opening word, "*Hashkiveinu*," "Cause us to lie down," thereby musically matching the meaning of the text. Yet the melody immediately rises up again to B-natural on the divine nomenclature, "*Adonai Eloheinu*," and keeps the pitch present through the word "*shalom*," of which God is often called the source. In the next phrase, another divine aphorism, "*Malkeinu*,"[102] receives the B-natural en route to the first fully-realized circle of fifths in measures 9-12:

Word	*uferos*	*aleinu*	*sukkat*	*shelomekha*	*vetakneinu*	*be'eitzah*	*tovah*	*mil'fanekha*
Meaning	spread	over us	shelter [of]	Your peace	and guide us	with counsel	good	from Your countenance
Harmony	Fm^7	B-flat	E-flat m^7	A-flat	Dm^7	Gm^7	Cm^7	[Cm^7]

When weighing the meaning of these words against their harmonic motion, one would be hard-pressed to find a more comforting, predictable, wholesome musical gesture than this circle of fifths. Of course, Jewish music of all styles is generally replete with sequences. Yet this sequence in particular seems perfectly suited to the text's sweet, simple entreaty for safety through the night, which Gottlieb recalls as the main sentiment he sought to express, "…there's an 18th century children's prayer, people may think it's

[101] Recalling the compositional process, he says "…[*Hashkiveinu*] came out, I would like to believe, 'me.'" Interview, 5 April 2010.

[102] Although Gottlieb composed this setting before the publication of *Mishkan T'filah* and its textual revisions to this prayer, substituting "*Shomreinu*" for "*Malkeinu*" ("Our Keeper" for "Our King") in measure 6 would certainly reinforce the musical tenderness of this moment.

older, called "Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep." I think that's an echo of "*Hashkiveinu*" in that prayer. And I think that's what I tried to capture in my setting of it."[103]

The structure of the traditional *Hashkiveinu* text is bookended with the "*uferos aleinu…*" petition. Naturally, Gottlieb sets the petition's repetition with virtually the same harmonic sequence in the recapitulation, measures 42-43.[104] It is in the piece's development that the composer starts departing both from the security of the circle of fifths and from other composers' division of the text. For Gottlieb, "*vehoshieinu*" in measure 13 marks not the end of the exposition but the beginning of a new idea, appropriately set in a new key area, replete with flats:

Word	*vehoshieinu*	*lema'an*	*shemecha*	*v'hagein*	*ba'adeinu*	*vehaseir*	*mei'aleinu*
Meaning	and save us	for the sake of	Your name	and defend	for our sake	and remove	from upon us
Harmony	A-flat m^7	D-$flat^7$	D-$flat^7$	G-flat M^7	C-$flat^9$/G-natural	F-$flat^7$	[F-$flat^7$]

Although Gottlieb has left the opening C $Major^7$ sonority far behind, the godly B-natural (in the guise of C-flat) remains heard on the words "*vehoshieinu*" and "*vehaseir*." But it is at that moment, in measure 16, that the text's litany of plagues creeps up, heralded by the threatening, harmonically remote F-$flat^7$ chord. Each plague in the ensuing four measures oscillates in dynamic extremes and inversions of the F-$flat^7$ sonority – but the B-natural/C-flat tone remains hovering in the background throughout. Furthermore, at measure 24, the deepest, darkest, densest moment of the piece –a closed B-$flat^7$ in the bass following the mention of the adversarial "*satan*" – the B-natural/C-flat remains

[103] Interview, 5 April 2010. In another of Gottlieb's nighttime prayer settings, "It is Evening," he features what he calls the "faith motive" of Bernstein's music: *sol-re-do.* See Appendix A, Example #8b. For more on the "faith motive," see "Symbols of Faith in the Music of Leonard Bernstein," *Funny, it Doesn't Sound Jewish* (Albany: SUNY/Library of Congress, 2004), 178-185.

[104] Other composers have set the word repetition similarly, particularly two of Gottlieb's teachers: Bernstein and Max Helfman (in the *Shabbat Kodesh* service).

stubbornly present in appoggiaturas to the accompaniment and in passing tones on the melody's melisma of "*umeiakhareinu*" ("from behind us"). This musically suggests an optimistic certainty, even on a subconscious level, that everything will be all right in the morning. Indeed, even when considering the recent "dark" plague that befell the Gulf of Mexico, the composer remains openly optimistic,

> And that's why I have still some confidence that we're going to get out of this oil spill [2010's BP accident], because we'll find something eventually. All my life has seemed to be that we're on the brink of total disaster and that civilization is going to go under.[105]

Gottlieb begins getting out of the development's depths at measure 26. He employs a move from his classical forebears by assigning the ultimate dominant sonority of G to the bass and also to the bottom of the melody's tentative ascent (in **bold**), "***uve****tzeil* ***kena****fekha* ***tasti****reinu*…" Peeking out from the "shadow of the wings" in measure 29, the melody anticipates a return to C Major at "***ki*** *Eil Shomereinu*." Flats gradually turn to sharps over the course of the phrase, and by measures 32-33, the melody plateaus on "*Atah*" at, of course, the B-natural, whose status as the leading tone takes on even more significance given its importance to the work as a whole. Throughout the recapitulation, virtually identical to the exposition until measure 44, feelings of familiarity and safety fittingly pervade the liturgical milieu of "*ushemor tzeiteinu uvoeinu lechayim uleshalom mei'ata ve'ad olam*." The last harmonic hint of a threat happens in the *khatimah* with an F-diminished^7 at measure 45, but by this point nothing can remove the ascent of the B-natural, held out on the last syllable of "*Adonai*." It even reconciles

[105] Interview, 6 June 2010.

with its enharmonic twin, C-flat, in measures 49-50; "*sukkat shalom*" and "*Yisraeil*" may be musically spelled differently, and even sound differently, but they are fundamentally parts of the same tone, made utterly whole by the last word of the piece, "*Yerushalayim*."

Jack Gottlieb's means of musical exegesis extends far beyond the scope of a single note or word. Lyrics in multiple languages, as can be found throughout the *Songs of Godlove* anthology, allow for multiple understandings of what his music conveys.[106] In a way, this approach toward sacred music composition parallels the rabbinic tradition of *midrash* (interpretation) of sacred texts over time: with every new insight, one makes a new contribution to the discussion over generations. Perhaps such an approach, as the theologian Emmanuel Levinas notes, may be viewed in itself as an act of divine Revelation: "…the participation of the person listening to the Word making itself heard, but also the possibility for the Word to travel down the ages to announce the same truth in different times."[107] Though not explicitly extant in Gottlieb's own theology, this notion of Revelation can help inform contemporary understandings not only of making sacred music, but also of listening to sacred music.

With Gottlieb's 1974/2005 setting of the "folk-song"[108] *Yerushalayim*, three languages and three modulations deliver multiple interpretations of the same melody and

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[106] Bringing out a melody in the piano accompaniment via solo instrument/s may also provide new understanding of the piece as a whole. Appendix A contains several such treatments of works analyzed in this chapter.

[107] Emanuel Levinas, "Revelation in the Jewish Tradition," in *Beyond the Verse: Talmudic Readings and Lectures*, Gary D. Mole, trans. (Bloomington, IN: Indiana Univ. Press, 1994), 131.

[108] In the endnotes to *Songs of Godlove, Volume II*, Gottlieb offers a fascinating account of how a 19th century Polish opera aria, adapted to Beirach Shafir's Yiddish and then Avigdor Meiri's Hebrew, gradually entered the canon of Jewish folk-songs.

accompaniment.[109] The restless, ever-moving piano line musically illustrates the opening Yiddish words "*Droysn blozt a vint a kalter a shreklekhe Kislev nakht*" ("Outside a cold wind blows on an awful [month of] Kislev night"). The piece modulates from the lamenting E minor of the Yiddish into the extolling F minor of the Hebrew into the beseeching F-sharp minor of the English (Gottlieb's original lyrics), increasing in intensity all the while. Yet in all three languages and keys, the subject of the speaker's words remains Jerusalem, and the prayer for health and welfare in the city called by God's Name[110], the holiest of places for generations, remains constant: "*du, mayn heylikher ort*."

In analyzing Gottlieb's synagogue songs, we can discern at least three different ways in which he alludes to traditional Jewish relationships with God. He frequently practices "musical exegesis" on specific words of the liturgy to bring forth new and unexpected meaning from the text. He depicts a "struggle" between complex, chromatic keyboard accompaniments and relatively simpler vocal lines. Finally, and most tellingly, a curious note in the melody can turn into a "still small voice" that reappears throughout an entire piece and unites disparate ideas into a cohesive whole through what might be aptly termed "omnipresent" means. Though not immediately apparent, this hint of constant, enduring presence amidst intrepid musical excursions ultimately helps ground a given piece in oneness. Viewed in this light, these compositional methods can help

[109] See Appendix A, Example #9. Example #9a indicates one of Gottlieb's suggested performance practices.

[110] As Gottlieb's own lyric reminds us, "*salém* [the Hebrew root for 'wholeness'] lies inside You, Your Name." The ultimate Messianic aphorism in Isaiah 9:5 is "*sar shalom*," "prince of peace," or, perhaps, "minister of wholeness."

contemporary worshippers understand how such thoroughly conceived synagogue music can bring them closer to God and into the divine process of creation and re-creation.

Chapter 4

Sharing the Prophets: The More Things Change…

HUCKSTER: You've really had a whale-of-a time of it, haven't you?

JONAH: I tell you, this business of being a Prophet is a lonely job.[111]

Jack Gottlieb seeks for his voice to be heard, not just as a composer, but also as author and lyricist. In addition to his significant body of scholarship, he possesses an ear for word play, poetry, and even oratory, like a public speaker drawing a crowd. These are some of the same tools that a Biblical prophet may well have used to make his case to the people Israel, in language that his audience could easily glean, in the hope that his speech might move them to action.

Reform Jews have long seen themselves as successors to the prophetic tradition, with their commitment to social justice and worship services full of stirring sermons and soaring anthems whose aim is, fittingly, to move people to action.[112] Reaffirming Reform's prophetic roots for the 21st century is the topic of a recent *CCAR Journal*, in which Rabbi Richard Levy writes, "If indeed our heritage as a prophetic movement is under siege, let us work to redeem it, to bring the prophets back into our synagogue, to walk with them into the streets and into the halls of government."[113]

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[111] Jack Gottlieb, "Fish Story," from *Sharing the Prophets* (New York: Board of Jewish Education, 1976), 29.

[112] Lawrence A. Hoffman, On Swimming Pools, Sound Holes, and Expanding Canons," in *Sacred Sound and Social Change*, ed. Hoffman and Janet R. Walton (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 337.

[113] Richard N. Levy, "Politics: A Prophetic Call to Rabbis," in *CCAR Journal* (Summer 2010), 11.

Gottlieb has done some of this work for us with a "musical encounter" called *Sharing the Prophets* (1976), scored for singers, keyboard and percussion, and commissioned by the Board of Jewish Education (BJE) on the occasion of the American Bicentennial. He transports figures from the first millennium B.C.E. to our day and age, imagines their reactions to contemporary issues, and incorporates traditional cantillation into popular song styles. But despite being a product of 1970s emphasis on personal social action, *Sharing the Prophets* was conceived to continue making a statement on social action long after its first performance. Paraphrasing former BJE Executive Vice-President Alvin Schiff's foreword to the score, Gottlieb reminds us, "…that the origins of American civilization are steeped in Biblical history, its places, persons and ideas. Inspired by the universal themes in the teachings of the Prophets, the work is an affirmation of their relevancy to today's world and for all times."[114]

In keeping with his practice of reworking compositions, Gottlieb subsequently updated the prophet Jeremiah's solo as a response to the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001. Although "Jeremiah on 9/11" is the most immediately relevant of the four *Prophets* selections included in his 2004 anthology *Songs of Godlove* (the others being "Roll Call," "The Sensus Census," and "Duet of Hope"), it is by no means the only one that can speak to Jews in the United States . Given all the challenges facing this country in the 21st century, each song helps show quite plainly that the more things change, the more things stay the same. In this chapter, I look at how four pieces from *Sharing the Prophets*, a forty-year old work, can still inform and even embody today's American Jewish experience.

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[114] "Notes and Translations," *Songs of Godlove, Volume II,* 119.

If we approach these four *Prophets* selections with open eyes and ears, we discover that each one plays upon a different emotional aspect of Haftarah trope, the chanting system by which the Prophetic books have long been heard in public and which forms the basis of traditional synagogue chant. The ancient melodic motif *munakh etnakhta*, roughly corresponding to solfeggio's *do-te-sol-te-re-do*, makes for a decisive bass line throughout "Roll Call," the selection which introduces each of the Biblical Prophets by name.[115] After a pun-filled opening, "There's never a depression / There's never a recession / When you make investments in Prophets," Gottlieb launches into a bright, up-tempo melody marked by whole steps (usually flatted sevenths or sharpened fourths) and reminiscent of an early musical theatre tune. The melody essentially occurs four times in four key areas: first in F Major during measures 8-17; then in A Major during measures 18-29; then in G Major during measures 44-57; and finally back in F Major from measure 64 to the end. While it may only be coincidence, these three pitches (F-A-G), writ large, are also the three principal tones heard in Haftarah trope's *munakh etnakhta* sequence when chanted in G minor.

In the course of "Roll Call," Gottlieb demonstrates his poetic prowess by rhyming nineteen proper names (seventeen *bona-fide* Prophets along with Daniel and Ezra) and citing two prophetic pronouncements, Malachi 2:10 and Isaiah 5:16, alongside a couple of his own. At measure 24, he writes, "If you're gonna be saved, you've gotta change the history of taking it out on the little guy. At measure 74, he writes, "Prophets all aim higher than you and I / They inspire us to greatness if we'd only try." Certain prophets,

[115] See Appendix A, Example #10. Example #10a excerpts the percussion part from the original 1976 score.

however, remind us that no matter how high they aim or great their efforts, they can still behave as flawed, feeling human beings.

The notion of allowing prophets to inspire our conduct continues in "The Sensus Census."[116] Subtitled "Jonah's Song," it depicts how hometown friends and neighbors receive a decidedly imperfect man immediately following the events of the Book of Jonah. The prophet expresses his frustration at his community's refusal to pay him full attention as he attempts to share all that he has been through. The *munakh-etnakhta* Haftarah motif can again be heard in the bass line, but this time it sounds punchy and agitated, appearing only on off-beats. Matching this emotion musically, Gottlieb calls for a "Moderate, Bossa Nova" tempo accented by maracas, and occasionally wanders into irregular meters in order to fit his lyrics. And as the title "The Sensus Census" suggests, the lyrics list off all the ways people pretend to perceive: hearing rather than listening; looking rather than seeing; touching rather than feeling. This increasingly desperate plea for attention peaks in measures 59-68: "So will you say encore? Will you recognize me? Please recognize me! Will you say encore, once more?"

We can understand Jonah's plea for attention and recognition as an allegory of Gottlieb's plea for the same. Ten years after the success of *Love Songs for the Sabbath*, a composer seeks more of his works to find favor in the eyes of the Jewish community, and he is instead met with indifferent stares. Indeed, as others have shown[117], Reform synagogue music of the mid-late 1970s was marked by the declining status of a through-

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[116] See Appendix A, Examples #11 and #11a.

[117] See, for example, Mark Kligman, "Contemporary Jewish Music in America," *American Jewish Year Book* 101 (2001), 115-124; Benjie Ellen Schiller, "The Hymnal as an Index of Musical Change in Reform Synagogues," *Sacred Sound and Social Change*, 205-207.

composed piece in the face of a camp-inspired folk tune that, ironically, was thought to bring participants closer together by evoking positive feelings. But in Gottlieb's estimation, a complete response to music should include both emotional and intellectual considerations:

> If you are uneducated about how music is put together, if you do not appreciate it in a historical, sociological context and if you respond to music only on a gut level, you are missing both the meaning and overestimating the feeling. You are devaluating the expression–what music is trying to communicate–as well as the impression–that is, how it is interpreted by the listener. You settle for surface (emotion) over substance (intellect). As a composer, I strive for a balance between the two.[118]

While one would be hard-pressed to find a place for "The Sensus Census" in a typical 21st century Reform service, its catchy rhythm, its call for people to be fully present, and its underlying message about paying attention could still connect with contemporary worshippers given the right occasion. It would make a compelling musical response to the Book of Jonah on Yom Kippur afternoon. It would be a fitting anthem for many Torah portions about Moses, both the greatest prophet of all and the Bible's first census-taker. He might even be imagined as the song's protagonist, especially given his frequent frustration with his people's behavior. These are but two examples of how contemporary synagogue-goers can count on "The Sensus Census" to draw them into its lesson, for the

[118] "How Practical is the Practice of the Practicum?" *ACC Koleinu* 9 (March 2001), 5.

most recent studies suggest that being drawn in is precisely how Reform Jews prefer to experience music in prayer, rather than witnessing it from afar.[119]

On a commemoration of September 11, 2001, when so many people witnessed the World Trade Center collapse, the right music could give voice to communal feeling far better than any spoken word could. "Jeremiah on 9/11," [120] Gottlieb's revision of the character's solo from *Sharing the Prophets*, expresses shock, awe, anger, and bitterness. Following a prelude punctuated by quotations from the Book of Lamentations (traditionally thought to be by Jeremiah) and outbursts of clashing chords and cymbals, the bass line yet again gives a home to the Haftarah *munakh-etnakhta* motif, this time sounding driving and insistent, falling squarely on the strong beats, to be delivered "with bluster." It provides the groundwork for cynical allusions to patriotic texts like "My country 'tis of thee" in measure 32, "From sea to shining sea" in measure 44, "Go Yankee Doodle Dandy" in measure 57, and "Oh, say can you see" in measure 73. Gottlieb even works in allusions to classic American marches, first subtly in measures 18-20, then overtly at measure 82 with a direct quotation of Sousa's "The Stars and Stripes Forever."

Unlike other patriotic American settings full of pride, glory and grandeur, "Jeremiah on 9/11" is full of scorn, sarcasm, and swagger. In an ironic nod to the notion of a single note uniting the tonal states of a piece, "Jeremiah" also hangs together on the B-natural/C-flat. But whereas this same pitch symbolizes God in "*Hashkiveinu*," in "Jeremiah" it symbolizes "*satan*," the adversary (appearing on that very word in measure

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[119] Peter S. Knobel and Daniel S. Schechter, "What Congregations Want in Worship: Perceptions from a CCAR Study," *CCAR Journal* 53 (Winter 2006), 42.

[120] See Appendix A, Examples #12 and #12a.

21). In "*Hashkiveinu*," the B-natural hovers a major seventh above the C Major tonic, or else leads inexorably to it from below. In "Jeremiah," the C-flat stubbornly stands opposed to the F-minor tonic, in either direction a tritone away: truly the devil in this music. When the Haftarah-inspired bass line begins, the B-natural/C-flat hides in the "crack" between the C and B-flat and comes to the fore in the melody at measure 37 (in **bold**), "**to** a degree!" In the G-sharp minor section, it is the mediant of the scale, the "blue note", and appears as a "**Sta**tute [sic] **of** Li**ber**ty" in measures 49-50. And in the B minor section beginning in measure 55, it squeezes its way into the tonic, wagging its nose, as it were, in the guise of "**Go Yan**kee Doodle Dan**dy**!" During the ensuing transitory section, the B-natural is "**mocking** democra**cy**" in measures 62-63 and, in measure 70, points inevitably to the word "ass." Through the penultimate C-minor section, it acts as the implied leading tone, appearing as "pre**sumed**…**the** inno**cent**" in measures 80-81, and at the core of the F diminished minor[9] sonority in measure 82, where the word is "doomed." Finally, the C-flat reigns supreme over the "**Land**" in measure 83, before having a veritable field day in the piece's seven-measure postlude and weaseling its way into the last two tone clusters.

But lest we be led to think the forces of evil will ultimately overwhelm us, Gottlieb also provides hints of melodic optimism in "Jeremiah on 9/11." Beneath that driving, insistent bass line, we can unearth Bernstein's "faith motive," hidden in the descending F-C-Bb figure of measure 30 and similar places later on. And the opening fragment of the melody at measure 32, for example – *do-me-te* – mirrors the pitches and rhythm of the Torah cantillation motif *tip'kha*, which can be translated as "handbreadth." Maybe this is Gottlieb's way of assuring us that even after the most unspeakable of

tragedies, we can put our faith in each other's hands, ever learning from what befalls us. For every anniversary of September 11, 2001, "Jeremiah 9/11" would be perfectly suited to recount America's reaction to the catastrophe as well as its resolve to continue on, united in grief – and in hope.

In "Duet of Hope," [121] the last of the *Prophets* selections to be included in *Songs of Godlove,* Gottlieb sets two anthems hand-in-hand: the European-Israeli "*Hatikvah*" and the Appalachian-American "Wayfaring Stranger." Each of these beloved folksongs possesses the same essential harmonic progression and, when paired together, take on even more poignancy. Both, after all, are bound up in the notion of reaching a "promised land." And although the only explicit prophetic element comes from Isaiah 2:2 ("And it shall come to pass at the end of days…"), Naftali Imber's Hebrew refrain for "*Hatikvah*," "*od lo avda tikvateinu*," ("Our hope is not yet lost,") is thought to have been inspired by Ezekiel 37:11, "*hinei omrim, yavshu 'atzmoteinu ve'avdah tikvateinu.*…" ("Behold, they say 'our bones are dried up and our hope is lost…'"). Moreover, we can still hear that same Haftarah motif, *munakh-etnakhta*, in the melody of "Wayfaring Stranger," at the words, "I'm going there…" Juxtaposing these texts and melodies together represents a unique articulation of the American Jewish experience—where we have come from, where we are going, and how we are getting there. It is a startlingly significant example of how music can move us on multiple levels simultaneously and make us eager for an encore. For music of significance, Gottlieb reminds us,

> …does not necessarily [provide instant gratification]. It gives up its secrets slowly, by increments that allow you to respond emotionally, spiritually and

[121] See Appendix A, Examples #13 and #13a.

intellectually a bit differently each time you hear it. That's what keeps it alive and vital.[122]

Each of the four selections from Jack Gottlieb's *Sharing the Prophets* has the potential to be music of significance in the synagogue. Service leaders can find in them kernels of ancient cantillation as well as contemporary truths about being fully present, taking action, coping with disaster, and yearning for a better place. In a time of constant knowledge-seeking, when we are accustomed to choosing from among several simultaneous voices the one that speaks to us best,[123] the voices in these songs can help American Jews remember that sometimes the way forward is to look back and consider what our Biblical forebears have to say. For unlike the solitary business of prophesying, being Jewish means never being alone. Communally, then, we are all "just a-going home."

[122] "How Practical is the Practice of the Practicum?" *ACC Koleinu* 9 (March 2001), 6.

[123] Lawrence Hoffman, "Post-Colonial Liturgy in the Land of the Sick," *CCAR Journal* 53 (Summer 2006): 31.

Chapter 5

"*Kekedem*": As at First

> My legacy is my work, no different than most any other creative artist. I just hope there will be people who will guard it and not let it get buried in the shuffle of things. But it's a very difficult thing to accomplish…. I guess our civilization doesn't allow for much room for too many things from the past, and that we are still bogged down, two centuries later, in music of the past – we feel most comfortable with that.[124]

To understand Jack Gottlieb's approach to Jewish worship music, we revisit "Duet of Hope." Upon considering the unique pairing of texts and tunes, we could conclude the following: the journey of a "poor wayfaring stranger" becomes more "hopeful" with the right companion. For Gottlieb, making music, like living life, is ideally accomplished in partnership. Take the soloist and the accompanist. He reminds us that, "To accompany means to break bread. It's the same root as company, companion – it's what they all share."[125] Take the performer and the perceiver. He reveals, "I search for beauty – beauty is a relative term. One man's dissonance is another man's consonance, years later."[126] Take the singer and the listener. He notes, "There are moments you need repose…and gain as much spiritual…gratitude, and awakening…from

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[124] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.
[125] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 9 November 2009.
[126] Interview, 5 April 2010.

the listening experience!"[127] Jack Gottlieb's practice of listening to, revisiting, revising, and rewriting his work can teach us much about putting the process before the product, or putting the search before the discovery. His willingness to let his music be adapted and edited for my senior recital speaks to his steadfast commitment to continually updating, making relevant, making meaningful, creating anew, or in Hebrew, "*kekedem*." In this closing chapter, I examine Jack Gottlieb's work in the context of his contemporaries, determine his influence and influences, and offer explicit suggestions for ensuring his legacy lives on, as fresh and new as it was "*kekedem*."

It was the new music of the 1930s and 1940s – the songs of Tin Pin Alley, Broadway and Hollywood – that Gottlieb says "…infiltrated my consciousness a great deal in my impressionable years, because I didn't know I was going to be a composer or a songwriter."[128] The crooning voices of Frank Sinatra, Bing Crosby and the like entered Gottlieb's ears and have remained influential to him ever since. It is no wonder that Gottlieb's own music seems to tap into primal American consciousness and makes listeners wonder whether they heard that tune before, because in so many words, they have: the common time signature, the bass always on the downbeats, the enduring dialogue between lyrics and instruments, and, as ever, that soothing circle of fifths. Anyone who has grown up in the United States intrinsically recognizes the American songbook genre, to which Gottlieb knowingly nods in his latest song, *The Tallit* (2010).[129] Based on an English translation of Yehuda Amichai's poem as it appears in

[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] See Appendix A, Example #14.

Mishkan T'filah, it is an ode to both the ritual prayer shawl and to an earlier, simpler time.[130]

Gottlieb captures both of Amichai's subjects in finely woven chromatic sequences that spin out in delicate, wistful ways. The piano provides a constant running commentary on the text, and even Gottlieb's expressive directions (e.g., "flutter away" at measure 45; "*l'hitra-ot*" at measure 66) allow the performers to paint a portrait of the *tallit* in all of Amichai's allegorical vignettes. Although Gottlieb includes an optional coda containing the actual liturgy for putting on a *tallit* (Psalm 104:1-2 and the blessing "…*lehit'ateif batzitzit*"), suggesting that his piece could be offered at this very early moment in a morning service, *The Tallit* would be received far more effectively as an anthem: to *b'nei mitzvah*, perhaps, or on a significant anniversary of one's becoming a *bar*/*bat mitzvah*. It is the song's inherent connection to personal life story, maybe paired alongside a photographic/videographic montage, that could give it lasting power. Used in this way, the music can help evoke poignant childhood memories like that of a 13-year old Gottlieb, "…as soon as that *bar mitzvah* was over, which I'll never forget, [it] was in the *shtibl*, and my aunts were up in the balcony and throwing candies down on me…"[131]

The Tallit was hardly the first piece demonstrating Gottlieb's appreciation for the power music has over youth; after all, *Sharing the Prophets* had first been commissioned for the purpose of reaching religious school students. The 1970 *New Years' Service for Young People* (Theophilous Music) represents Gottlieb's initial foray into synagogue music geared towards children's voices. Written early on during his brief tenure as music

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[130] "Weekday Morning," *Mishkan T'filah: A Reform Siddur*, ed. Elyse D. Frishman (New York: CCAR Press, 2007), 27.

[131] Ibid.

director at Temple Israel of Saint Louis, the work contains the liturgy of that congregation's religious school High Holiday services (ostensibly based on *The Union Prayer Book, Volume II*) as well as several original English prayers penned by the composer, all to be sung by students ranging in age from kindergarten to high school.[132] Although many of the selections are either too dated or too sophisticated for contemporary usage, some of them may yet have potential in today's High Holiday and Shabbat worship. And one piece – "*Eitz Chayim*" – has become Gottlieb's best-known and most-heard synagogue song to date.

Among the lesser-known selections from Gottlieb's *New Year's Service for Young People* are three versions of "*Mi Chamocha*." "*Mi Chamocha A*," [133] subtitled "for Rosh Hashana," is a joyful, jazz-inflected, ¾ time rendering of the traditional High Holiday evening motif (*sol-la-sol-mi-fa-sol*), incorporating texts for evening and morning, and a welcome alternative to Gershon Ephros's standard edition of Salomon Sulzer's version. "*Mi Chamocha B,*" [134] subtitled "for Yom Kippur," incorporates the Ashkenazic "*Kol Nidrei*" tune for this solemn, soulful rendering of the prayer. And "*Mi Chamocha C,*"[135] subtitled "for all occasions," is a simple, wide-eyed take on the text reflecting, perhaps, the awe and wonder of the children of Israel as they beheld the splitting of the Red Sea. The opening interval, fittingly, is a minor third (*mi-sol*): that primal inflection known to schoolchildren the world over.[136]

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[132] Ibid.
[133] See Appendix A, Example #15.
[134] See Appendix A, Example #16.
[135] See Appendix A, Example #17.
[136] It is also the theme of one of Gottlieb's first published works, *Kids' Calls* (1957). Although recent studies have found connections between the minor third and

Gottlieb uses the minor third in other ways later on in the *New Year's Service*. In "Silent Devotion" and the ensuing "May the Words,"[137] the minor third sounds bluesy, falling on the pitches F and A-flat. These act as *do-me* in the context of F minor and *sol-te* in the context of B-flat^7, in both cases mindful of a George Gershwin melody like "Summertime" or "Three Preludes for Piano, No. 2."[138] All these pieces evoke a brooding, pensive sentiment, a wholly appropriate ideal in the context of a worship service's "silent prayer" spot. Gottlieb seizes this spot as a prime opportunity to respond to the text, such that during the repetition of "May the Words," the choir has the option to sing the same melody in English, Hebrew, or with *bocca chiusa.* If the first time they sing either language's words aloud, it is literally "*imrei fi,*" "words of my mouth." And if the second time they hum the melody, one could argue, it is "*hegyon libi,*" "the mediations of my heart." Thus, Gottlieb lends equal weight to both subjects of Psalm 19:15. Or to use Cantor Benjie Ellen Schiller's theory on how Jewish sacred music functions, Gottlieb's treatments of "Silent Devotion" and "May the Words" in his *New Year's Service* are ideal examples of meditative music, "…that which leads us inward, toward reflective, contemplative prayer."[139]

If these two selections are examples of meditative music, then Gottlieb's "*Hodo Al Eretz,*"[140] the text that escorts the Torah back to the ark, is most decidedly an example

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sadness, others do not hear the interval so gloomily. See Daniel Wattenberg, "What Makes a Song Sad," *The Atlantic,* 10 December 2010.

[137] See Appendix A, Example #18.

[138] Gottlieb has demonstrated this interval's ubiquity in davening and popular music alike. See *Funny, it Doesn't Sound Jewish* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2004), 216-218.

[139] Benjie Ellen Schiller, "The Many Faces of Jewish Sacred Music," *Synagogue 2000: Prayer Curriculum* (New York: Synagogue 2000, 2001), 8-20.

[140] See Appendix A, Example #19.

of majestic music, "…that which evokes within us a sense of awe and grandeur."[141] The awe and grandeur of Psalm 148:13-14 live in the lowered seventh scale degree (the pitch G-natural in the key of A Major), a marker of the *Adonai Malakh* mode traditionally associated with this liturgy. The G natural is heard first in the opening chord, and then in the alto and soprano lines respectively in measures 4-5. Gottlieb treats these verses with a succinct but noble melody, and provides contrast both in key and dynamic at measure 9, foraying first into A-flat Major, then back through the original A Major tonic on the way up to a fleeting moment of raucous B-flat Major in measures 18-19. But A Major takes irrevocable hold of the reigns for the last two measures of the piece, making the brief B-flat Major section Gottlieb's very subtle allusion, perhaps, to the *Yishtabakh* mode's flatted second scale degree. Such an allusion of praise would hardly be amiss, especially on the word "*hal'luyah*." All these factors would make this "*Hodo Al Eretz*" a fine majestic moment in any Torah service – but especially one that is followed by a poignant, hummable "*Eitz Chayim*."[142]

Gottlieb's "*Eitz Chayim*" [143] from the *New Year's Service* has become a staple at Reform synagogues and HUC-JIR campuses around the world, thanks in part to Professor Eliyahu Schleifer, who made it a fixture of fledgling cantorial students' curricula in Jerusalem, and in part to the editors of *Shaarei Shirah: Gates of Song*, who included it in that anthology alongside other settings of the text.[144] Perhaps it was that initial, crooning minor third that first attracted them to Gottlieb's setting, or maybe it was the steady,

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[141] Schiller, "The Many Faces of Jewish Sacred Music," 8-19.

[142] To clarify the apparent discrepancy in transliteration, I use the common spelling to refer to the title and the academic spelling to refer to the lyrics.

[143] See Appendix A, Example #20.

[144] See Appendix A, Example #20a. Note that the piece is transposed down one whole step, ostensibly to make it easier for congregational singing.

pulsing bass notes, or even the delicious juxtaposition of such a jazzy setting in the synagogue. From the composer's point of view, though, the heart of this piece lies in the opening motif: that descending figure on the words "*Eitz khayim hi*" and "*Derakheha*," *do-te-mi* in A minor, occurs again in retrograde on the word "*Hashiveinu*," *la-do-re-mi* in C Major.[145] Not only does the textual meaning ("Cause us to return") literally match the musical meaning, then, but the majestic, uplifting nature of the "*Hashiveinu*" section perfectly complements the blissful, bluesy nature of the opening "*Eitz khayim*" section. In short, this is a piece that works.

Over the course of this thesis, I have suggested a number of ways to make Jack Gottlieb's music work in the context of contemporary synagogue services. One such way is to follow the composer's example by adapting his music to reflect the latest textual and instrumental innovations in worship. In the months immediately following its premiere, Gottlieb revised *Love Songs for the Sabbath* to make it more fitting for late 1960s Reform services. All of his revised settings in *Songs of Godlove* contain theologically gender-neutral language and English alternatives to the Hebrew (including "*Eitz Chayim*" and "*Mi Chamocha C,*" both from the *New Year's Service*).[146] Later on, Gottlieb also added trumpet and percussion parts to the entire Torah service liturgy from the *New Year's Service* (including "*Hodo Al Eretz*" and "*Eitz Chayim*"), thereby lending even more majesty to the moment.[147] As interpreters and performers of his music, concerned with both making it accessible to today's worshippers and remaining faithful to its compositional integrity, we too can adapt it to 21st century trends. In Appendix A, I

[145] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.
[146] See Appendix A, Examples #17a and #20d.
[147] See Appendix A, Examples #19a, #19b, #20b, and #20c.

include my own attempts to do so, among them a transposed, chorded version of "Candle Blessing No. 1"[148]; a bass clarinet line derived from the accompaniment of "*Hashkiveinu*"[149]; an indication of where a solo instrument can play the melody in the "Silent Devotion" from the *New Year's Service*.[150] In the recital component of this project, I invited the congregation to join the choir in repeating the "*Hashiveinu*" section of "*Eitz Chayim*."[151] Through all of these examples, I demonstrate how so much of Gottlieb's music offers myriad opportunities for others to appreciate it and take part in it. As Christopher Small writes,

> When we take part, whether as performers or listeners or in any other capacity, in a musical performance that we find beautiful, it must [be] because the inner relationships of the performance accord, or fit, in some way with those relationships which we imagine to be ideal.[152]

Like music, worship too is concerned with relationships: the individual with God, individuals with each other, the service leaders with their congregation, and especially the service leaders with each other.[153] Any cantor's attempt to introduce more music like Gottlieb's into contemporary Jewish worship must meet with the approval of the

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[148] See Appendix A, Example #3a.
[149] See Appendix A, Example #8a.
[150] See Appendix A, Example #18a.
[151] See Appendix A, Example #20e.
[152] *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover, NH: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 219.
[153] At a panel discussion during the 2006 "Lost Legacy" conference, former JTS Chancellor Ismar Schorsch declared that collaboration between cantor, rabbi and congregation "…holds out the greatest promise for creating music that will give a sense of the sanctity of the space." "Reclaiming American Judaism's Lost Legacy: The Art of Synagogue Music," *The Chronicle* 69 (2007): 32.

officiating rabbi(s), who may be initially reticent at the notion. This is understandable, considering how much of the late 20th century rabbi-cantor dynamic left little to be desired in the ways of effective communication. And even some of today's rabbis would have difficulty understanding why time and money should be spent preparing more complex musical settings for services, especially if, as Gottlieb wishes, there were to be "…at least one piece from my generation that is required at every service."[154] But Cantor Schiller urges clergy to recognize worship music ultimately for what it does, noting "We have spent too much energy defending particular musical styles as if the music were the end in itself."[155] While new cantorial curricula and continuing education programs have certainly helped to broaden the worship music discussion, more music education opportunities geared towards rabbinical students would give them that much more to say about the subject. Gottlieb understood this back in 2000, wondering

> why are there so few course offerings in music, if any, in the [HUC] rabbinical school?…. Yes, I know the excuse: not enough time; the plates are too full... Synagogue music is at a crossroads, and if the two schools do not cross each other's tracks starting–yesterday, redemption of the past will be irretrievable.[156]

As of this writing, music-based elective courses like "The Art of Creating Meaningful Worship" and "Contemporary Congregational Repertoire" attract growing numbers of rabbinical and cantorial students alike. When the late Debbie Friedman was appointed to the faculty in 2007, students of both programs were given yet another

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[154] Interview, New York, 9 November 2009.

[155] Schiller, "The Many Faces of Jewish Sacred Music," 8-19. She is surely referencing, in part, the trialogue between Lawrence Hoffman, Gershon Sillins and Ben Steinberg in *CCAR Journal* 38 (Summer 1991).

[156] "How Practical is the Practice of the Practicum?" *ACC Koleinu* 9 (March 2001), 2.

opportunity to "cross each other's tracks" academically through individual and group studies with one of the world's leading figures in Jewish music. And another way of furthering rabbinical music education has been proposed by Michael Leavitt, president of the American Society of Jewish Music (ASJM): forming a choir of rabbis.

> I've identified already about six or eight rabbis who sing in choruses within New York City alone; I'm sure there are others out there who do that avocationally. But it's ironic that they are singing in a chorus and not necessarily singing in a chorus in their own synagogues…. I think it would demonstrate that there are rabbis that are interested in music, that if nothing else, participation is fun and uplifting and could be applied to a congregation. After all, if a rabbi can do it, why not a congregant? It doesn't have to be professionals who make good music.[157]

Leavitt has revealed that he is in the planning stages of a follow-up to the "Lost Legacy" conference that would focus on congregational volunteer choirs. Although such an event would be welcome, the ASJM would hardly be the first organization to facilitate a convening on this issue. The Zamir Choral Foundation's annual North American Jewish Choral Festival (NAJCF), now over twenty years old, is testament to the popularity of avocational singing in synagogues. In July 2010, the NAJCF bestowed four composers with its "*Hallel v'Zimrah*" award in recognition for their contributions to Jewish music: Samuel Adler, Ben Steinberg, Charles Davidson…and Jack Gottlieb.

The positive effect of receiving the "*Hallel v'Zimrah*" award on Gottlieb's legacy cannot be overstated. Hundreds of volunteer choristers learned and performed his pieces,

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[157] Interview with Michael Leavitt, New York, 7 April 2010.

purchased his books, and brought it all back to their communities, thereby marketing his music among the Jewish masses in a way that the composer had never experienced before. Rabbi Daniel Freelander, an organizer of the NAJCF and overseer of Transcontinental Music Publications, describes how lack of sufficient marketing has plagued Gottlieb's music,

> Jack's material was always on paper – we didn't have recordings of it, and it wasn't widely performed. It wasn't widely performed in a liturgical setting, even though a lot of it would have worked in a liturgical setting. That's a source of sadness I have, but that's built into the system: only the practitioners – [synagogue-employed] composers and congregations – are able to get their stuff spread…."[158]

Some of Gottlieb's old Brandeis Camp chums became cantors themselves, like Charles Davidson and Raymond Smolover, and thus had their own synagogues as platforms for their works. Gershon Kingsley used Israeli roots, personal charisma, and a flair for technological innovation to establish himself as a highly creative synagogue and theatre musician, much like fellow *sabras* Aminadav Aloni and Bonia Shur, who had the added benefit of being on faculty at HUC-JIR in Cincinnati for many years. Yehudi Wyner is the son and scion of eminent Jewish composer Lazar Weiner; Wyner's fellow native Canadian Ben Steinberg is the son of a cantor and a musical mainstay of Toronto synagogues. Before serving on the faculties of Juilliard, Eastman, and Southern Methodist University, another cantor's son, Samuel Adler, built up Dallas's celebrated Temple Emanu-El Choir and was later succeeded as its director by Simon Sargon.

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[158] Interview with Rabbi Daniel Freelander, New York, 14 April 2010.

Stephen Richards had already established himself as a musical theatre composer and arranger before being invested as cantor, and this generation's youngest member, Michael Isaacson, has bridged gaps between classical, camp, synagogue, and stages throughout his career.

Unlike all of these other composers, Jack Gottlieb has lacked a steady platform for presenting his synagogue music. His only professional stints in Jewish institutional life were both short-lived and maybe a decade too late to have a widespread lasting effect on worship music. Members of Gottlieb's own "Silent Generation," who grew up in the same Depression he did, who heard the same songs he did, would accordingly be the most likely to resonate with his music.[159] Freelander explains,

> the time period in which Jack could have had the greatest success in congregations was really the mid-1960s through the late 1970s, because that's when the people who grew up in the early 1950s came to adulthood in the early 1960s, that's the music they listened to. That's what he's carrying forward.[160]

Perhaps the simplest way to carry forward the musical legacy of Gottlieb and his contemporaries is to get to know them personally. In October 2008, the Joint Commission on Worship, Music, and Religious Living (JCWMRL), sponsored by HUC-JIR, the American Conference of Cantors, and the Union for Reform Judaism, undertook a project entitled "Music as Midrash." Through recording and publishing interviews and musical examples, the projects aims

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[159] Fitting much of Gottlieb's personal testimony, the "Silent Generation" has been characterized as "…grave and fatalistic, conventional, possessing confused moral values, expecting disappointment but desiring faith…." "The Younger Generation," *Time Magazine*, 5 November 1951.

[160] Interview with Rabbi Daniel Freelander, New York, 14 April 2010.

> to highlight contemporary composers of synagogue music and point up the relationship between the people and the music they write: their sources, backgrounds, life experiences; the way in which musical settings reflect the proclivities and Jewish personalities of the people who wrote them. The educational purpose of the project is to put a human face on music that people know or to which they are being introduced, to highlight the human processes by which music is created, and to illustrate how musical settings serve as *midrashim*—in the broadest personal, expressive sense—on liturgical texts.[161]

As of this writing, JCWMRL members working on the "Music as Midrash" project have already recorded interviews with several members of the "Silent Generation" of Jewish composers: Gottlieb, Adler, Davidson, Steinberg, and Wyner. Respecting Jonah's wish from "The Sensus Census" to "look, but see; hear, but listen," "Music as Midrash" is but the first step towards binding composers' sacred stories with their sacred music. The rest of the work lies with ordinary Jews. Art Grand, the JCWMRL chair, teaches that "…each of us can be one who listens to the prayers and stories of others. By being one who listens, we can help others to experience the One who listens."[162] This is Jack Gottlieb's wish too:

> I hope my legacy will have some lasting value, since [contemporary] synagogue [music] is like a roller coaster: we have our ups and downs. And right now, as far as I'm concerned, we're in the down curve, and someday…people will

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[161] Richard Sarason, "WMRL Minutes from Composer Video Work Group," October 2008.

[162] Art Grand, "Teaching Adults About God," *Torah at the Center* 14 (Fall 2010), 5.

have the judgment to balance between participation and listening – active listening![163]

Through our active listening, whether in conversation or in worship, each of us can help carry forward Gottlieb's musical legacy in today's Reform synagogues. The thoughtful, communicative clergy team that seeks to create a complete public prayer experience will find natural moments for Gottlieb's songs: moments of majesty, of meditation, of reflection on words of Torah, of considering sacred texts in new and challenging ways. Adapting Gottlieb's sacred music for contemporary liturgical language and instrumentation is not only in keeping with the composer's own practice of revising, but also makes them that much more approachable for 21st century ears. And to the Jew in the congregation who has never before heard such music in worship, Gottlieb's settings represent completely new ways of engaging with God, faith, and tradition. Thus they help make that person's praying experience profound, fresh and vital… "*kekedem.*"

In Hebrew, "*kekedem*" can mean "like before," or "as it was in the past," or even "the good old days:" the days when Tin Pan Alley tunes dominated the radio charts; the days when campfire songs were limited to the campfire; the days when art music was the norm in Reform synagogue worship. "*Kekedem*" could mean all those things, but in a very literal translation, it also means "as at first." As at first: recreating the world each week. As at first: realizing the meaning of the struggle. As at first: partnering the past with the present. In so doing, may we come to understand Jack Gottlieb's sacred songs as he does: living, breathing, conceived in love, "*shirei yedidot.*"

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[163] Interview with Jack Gottlieb, New York, 5 April 2010.

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