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Report on the Master of Sacred Music Written Project Submitted by

Janece Cohen

in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for Investiture

The Life and Music of Cantor William Sharlin

Janece has provided a timely description and analysis of the life and music of William Sharlin, one of the most creative figures in American Jewish music today. The work is well-researched, well-organized, and well-written. Based largely on extensive interviews with the composer and with cantors who have been taught or otherwise influenced by him, the project serves as an excellent model for similar types of research based on oral history without being excessively anecdotal.

We are taken step-by-step through Sharlin's colorful life, together with occasional scintillating vignettes of Jewish life, such as musical life in Jerusalem in the 1930's. We gain useful information on the early history of the School of Sacred Music in New York, as well as the Department of Sacred Music in Los Angeles.

However, the project is not just narrative. Particularly important are Sharlin's views on the role of the cantor as sheliach tsibbur, where even in a Reform synagogue "you can expose them to a person who is praying." Equally insightful are Sharlin's views on nusach and what changes in the recitative were necessary and appropriate for the hazzanut of the late twentieth-century American synagogue. As a composer, Janece shows how Sharlin differentiates between "insiders" and "outsiders"; drawing upon the rich musical vocabulary of the synagogue he definitely belongs to the class of the former. The writer skillfully analyzes the salient characteristics of Sharlin's musical style and compositional techniques, whether for new pieces or settings, such as harmonic color, canons, ostinato, congregational melody as cantus firmus, etc. The musical examples are provided in the appendix, together with a most useful compilation of Sharlin's published and unpublished works.

I have no hesitation in accepting the project for the degree of MSM, and I commend Janece for this most useful and insightful work.

Respectfully submitted,
Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg

April 2, 1990

THE LIFE AND MUSIC OF CANTOR WILLIAM SHARLIN
JANECE ERMAN COHEN,

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

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

March 15, 1990

Advisor: Rabbi Geoffrey Goldberg

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I would also like to thank all of the friends and colleagues of Cantor Sharlin who participated in the interviews and made this paper a possibility.

Thanks and love to my parents, brothers, and grandmother, who "always knew I could do it!"

To Cantor William Sharlin, my teacher, my mentor, my friend, thank you for sharing your insight and understanding of the music of our prayers with me. And most of all, thank you for being my inspiration.

To Jordan, for taking time out from writing his thesis to answer all my silly questions, time and again you exceed all bounds of patience and support. Thank You.

INTRODUCTION

Cantor William Sharlin is one of the most prominent figures in the world of American Jewish Music today. He is a Cantor who is respected and emulated by his colleagues and students. He has been a teacher to Rabbis, Cantors, and lay people, children and adults alike. He is the composer and arranger of some of the most popular and accessible liturgical pieces written during this century.

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate just how great an impact he has had on synagogue life in the Reform Movement. The information for this project was gathered in the form of interviews with Cantor Sharlin, his colleagues, students, and friends.

CHAPTER ONE

William Sharlin was born in New York on January 7, 1920 to Isaac and Ida Sharlin.¹ There were three other children in the family, two boys, Ephraim and Hillel, and a girl, Rachel. William's father was a children's wear manufacturer and his mother did most of the designing and planning for the small business.² The family lived in Harlem, and William began attending the Yeshiva D'Harlem at a young age.³ Harlem was not a predominantly Jewish area, but it had a sizable Jewish community with a number of synagogues. Between the years of 1927 - 1930, the neighborhood began to change and a large Puerto Rican community developed in the area. Because of the gangs, it became necessary for young William to be escorted to and from his school, which was only a block away from home. When William was ten years old, he and his family left Harlem and moved to the East Bronx.

The Sharlin family was strictly observant. As William put it, "Not radical, but mainstream Orthodox". They prayed three times a day, observed the Shabbat, and while they were allowed to walk outside without a kippa,³ they wore kippot while eating, studying, and praying.

¹ Unless otherwise noted, the information presented in this chapter is taken from an interview with Cantor Sharlin on June 27, 1989.

² From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on January 18, 1990.

³ Kippa is a skullcap, also referred to as a yarmulka.

William began attending the synagogue with his father and brothers, on a daily basis, from the time he was a very young child. He learned how to lead the services, and was able to chant the Hebrew in the traditional prayer modes.⁴ He attended services regularly until the age of seventeen or eighteen. After the move to the Bronx, he continued his schooling at Yeshiva D'Bronx, where he (eventually) became Bar Mitzvah. Reminiscing about it, William said,

I was the hazzan⁵ for the entire service, Shachrit through Musaf.⁶ I did the entire Torah portion, and I even gave the drashah in Hebrew. I worked with my Rav on that drashah. I regret very much that the drashah was lost. I would be most fascinated to have that in my possession. I don't remember what I said, but the parashah was Vay'hi (Genesis 47:28-50:26). I have very few tangible mementos of the old days. My family didn't have the need for remembrances, collections, historical...At my Bar Mitzvah the only gift I got was a gold coin and this beautiful Megillah, a wooden one.

After his Bar Mitzvah, Sharlin studied at the Talmudical Academy of Yeshivah University for two years. He also went to the Bet Midrash L'Morim at Yeshiva University.

Although his Hebrew was excellent, it was learned entirely at school. The languages spoken in the Sharlin household were Yiddish and English. Explaining it, Sharlin

⁴ This traditional chanting is known as davening.

⁵ A Hazzan is a Cantor.

⁶ Shachrit and is the morning service and Musaf is the special, additional prayer service for Shabbat.

⁷ Drashah is a short sermon.

said,

[My parents]...didn't come out of a Zionist background. They were descendants of religious generations that settled in Palestine. My mother spoke Yiddish almost exclusively. My father spoke English fairly well. But there was a mixture. He would sometimes speak Yiddish to me and I would reply in English. I spoke some Yiddish. I learned most of my Yiddish from my grandmother, who was illiterate, even in Yiddish. I learned a great deal because I used to read the newspapers to her.

Sharlin does not know from where his musical ability came. While his father always enjoyed a good hazzan, and the family had big seders that were a "grand musical experience," neither of his parents were musicians. The whole family sang very well. The household was naturally musical. The three brothers and sister used to sing three and sometimes four part harmonies arranged for them by the then ten year old William. It was an important part of their childhood. As Sharlin tells it,

We used to sing a lot around the house...until today, my surviving brother and sister remember one particular Chanukah piece that I arranged for us. When we get together, we sort of recall parts of it. Hanerot Hallalu Anachnu Madlikin

Rachel, his sister, had a piano and took lessons. That was William's first exposure to music. After the move to the Bronx when he was eleven, William began to take piano lessons. He was excellent at memorization. The pieces he learned then are "still in his fingertips." While his parents were not opposed to his learning to play the piano, music was not the

career they had in mind) for their son. It was his sister who guided and encouraged him in his musical endeavors.

In 1935, when Sharlin was fifteen years old, his parents decided to pack up all their belongings, except the piano, which was dumped out on the street, and move their family to Palestine. Both his mother and father had been born there, and while most of his father's family had moved to the United States, his mother's family had remained there. After a twenty-one day long cruise to Haifa, which William recalls as, "a beautiful, fantastic experience," the family, with the exception of Ephraim, his oldest brother, who stayed in New York, arrived in Jerusalem.

Using a neighbor's piano, William continued practicing what he had been taught in the Bronx. In 1936, a short year after their arrival in Palestine, Ida tragically died. Deeply affected by her death, the sixteen year old son took refuge in his music. His brother helped him to enter the Jerusalem Conservatory of Music, where he continued his piano studies with a fervor. While studying piano with Giveret Polonski, the young man began to compose short pieces for that instrument, without any real training in composition. Those early works are still in Sharlin's possession. During this sad period, he continued his Judaic studies as well, attending the Bet Midrash L'morim Mizrachi in Jerusalem.

After his mother's death, William spent much time in Mea Sh'arim. He went to synagogue daily to say Kaddish⁸ in what was called The Shtiblach. It was a row of some six or eight tiny synagogues where one could always find a minyan⁹ in which to participate.¹⁰ Occasionally he would take the Amud¹¹ and lead services. He remembers one time,

It was Saturday evening, and I was there for Mincha and for the Saturday night Maariv service.¹² And they wouldn't even turn the lights on so they needed some one who could handle the service without a siddur.¹³ They couldn't find anyone so I volunteered. I did the entire service in the dark.

Then the family changed synagogues and moved to one near Machaneh Yehuda called Makor Baruch. They attended Shabbat services there for a year or two with this congregation of mixed Ashkenazic and Sephardic Jews. Recounting the time Sharlin said,

Congregational singing was very intense there. And the children's choirs participated and I learned a lot of wonderful melodies, some of which I still know, and I've notated...That was my last synagogue

⁸ Kaddish is the prayer said daily for a family member who has died.

⁹ Minyan is a group of ten or more Jewish men needed to say Kaddish.

¹⁰ From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on January 18, 1990.

¹¹ The podium from which a service is led.

¹² Mincha is the (daily) afternoon service and Maariv is the (daily) evening service.

¹³ Siddur is the prayerbook.

experience in Jerusalem."¹⁴

In 1939, William's father decided to leave Palestine and to return to the United States. Things had not gone well for him after his wife's death. After much consideration, the entire family decided to return with him. For William, the decision was a very difficult one. He had become extremely attached to his new country. As he tells about it,

I lived through the riots of 1936, which had a strong impact on me. We lived in the midst of turmoil. My house, which happened to be right at the border, near the Old City, became the headquarters of the Hagganah.

Upon their return to New York, William had to attend night school to obtain his High School diploma since all of the credits he had earned in Jerusalem were not accepted. His father had decided that his scholarly son should be a Hebrew teacher, so the next step was to return to Bet Midrash L'morim at Yeshiva University. By the second year, Sharlin realized that his real love was music, and with the help of his sister, he enrolled in the Manhattan School of Music, first studying piano, and then as a full time music student.

In 1942 Sharlin was drafted into the army. It was an experience he seemed to enjoy a great deal. Always having been a quiet, somewhat shy person, the gregarious life of a duty soldier had immense appeal to him. He was posted in Virginia and his duties included "standing guard, chasing

¹⁴ From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on January 18, 1990.

prisoners, and K.P.". Then, the last year, he was assigned to the Department of Information and Education, and ended up in Personal Affairs. Although he was never connected with the Chaplaincy office, he, on occasion, substituted as organist for the Catholic services. Because of his musical background, William used to get one more assignment that he tells about with great amusement.

They used to send me out to pick up pianos that had been donated for the Day rooms, social rooms. I would be sent out with a crew to examine the piano. We would all get on this truck and drive through Washington D.C. playing the piano. It was a major fun thing.

After his discharge from the army in 1945, Sharlin returned to the Manhattan School of Music. He majored in composition and minored in piano. He studied piano with Victor Gruen who at the time was a noted duo-pianist with his wife.¹⁵ He studied composition with Vittorio Gianinni, and musicology with Hugo Reese. His thesis for musicology was "16th-Century Keyboard Music of Germany". As Sharlin said, "It was a great experience. I was doing serious research."

William was working on both a Bachelors and a Masters degree at the same time. He was not sure what he would do with those degrees once he acquired them. Although he was being prepared to teach at the college level, he did not particularly enjoy the teaching experiences he was having at the time. During his last year of school William taught

¹⁵ From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on January 18, 1990.

theory and harmony at the Manhattan School of Music. His classes were filled with students who were there merely to fulfill requirements. None had a particular love for the material. It proved frustrating for the young teacher. Sharlin described it as "dull, academic kind of work." He still was not sure what he wanted to do with his life.

CHAPTER TWO

William Sharlin graduated from the Manhattan School of Music in 1949, having earned both a Bachelors and a Masters degree.¹⁶ He had no specific plans, and he did not know what his next step should be. He was discussing his quandary with friends, and one of them told him about the concept of the Jewish Community Center, and that these centers were growing in popularity in the New York area. His friend also said that Jewish Community Centers needed music directors. With Sharlin's background, he would be a natural candidate for a position like that. William liked the idea but felt that he needed to further pursue his Jewish education before he could become a Jewish professional. He was encouraged to discuss further educational and career possibilities with someone at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, School Of Sacred Music, and so he set up a meeting with Dr. Eric Werner.¹⁷

William was accepted into the School of Sacred Music as a special student, not in the Cantorial program. For the

¹⁶ Unless otherwise noted, the information presented in this chapter was taken from an interview with Cantor Sharlin on June 27, 1989.

¹⁷ Dr. Eric Werner was appointed professor of Jewish music and liturgy at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio in 1939. In 1951 he became the Chairman of its School of Sacred music in New York.

first year he attended various classes including Nusach¹⁸ and Music History. He completed learning the six systems of cantillation¹⁹ in a matter of weeks. He studied Advanced Liturgy with Isaiah Zeldin.²⁰ Although his Hebrew was fluent, he continued to work on that as well.

Sheldon Merel was a very good friend of Sharlin's and remembers him then as being quiet and shy.²¹

Werner brought him into the School of Sacred Music as a special student. He was searching for a direction. The other students recognized that he had a terrific background and often came to him for coaching. He was a wonderful pianist and became a favorite accompanist of his fellow students....a shy, scholarly person whose skills and abilities grew by leaps and bounds.²²

Merel and Sharlin were very close. They studied together, socialized, and often double dated. Shelley was the person who helped convince William to graduate as a Cantor. Speaking about him, Sharlin recalled that he was

...a good friend of mine. He helped me, supported

¹⁸ The term nusach signifies a melodic pattern or prayer mode which is used in the traditional chanting of prayer texts. It is similar to the Arabic Maqam. Definition-Macy Nulman, Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music (New York: McGraw Hill, 1975), pg. 189.

¹⁹ The term cantillation is used to describe the musical interpretation of the T'amim (accents) that accompany the printed text of the Hebrew scriptures. Nulman, pg. 43-44.

²⁰ Isaiah Zeldin is the Rabbi of Stephen S Wise Synagogue in Los Angeles, California.

²¹ Sheldon F. Merel is the Cantor of Congregation Beth Israel in San Diego, California.

²² From an interview with Cantor Merel on July 26, 1989.

me. I was a part of his home. I was not a loner, but I lived an insular kind of life. That was my family style....So he said, 'Look, you're here. You might as well go finish it.' You have virtually all you need.

The School of Sacred Music was brand new at the time, and when Sharlin decided to work towards investiture, they gave him advanced standing, and put him in the School's first graduating class. He completed what was then a three year program in two years.

Recalling his classes Sharlin said,

It was the most "Erev Rav Saf Suf" collection of guys. One brilliant singer, Leo Merkovitch, old fellow, just a brilliant, fantastic singer. Ozen, who went into a Conservative congregation,...to Israel Tabatski ... Silverstein, who also went into a Conservative Synagogue,...Joe Portnoy of Temple Emanuel of San Francisco. It was interesting. What happened because of my background, I became involved with the teaching level of the school. I used to help out. I used to help notate for some of the Hazzanim who weren't great musicians. I would help the students and do little arrangements for them. That's when I started the beginnings of my liturgical musical composition life, though in a very modest way.

This was also the period when William became one of the editors of the Adolph Katchko materials. Sharlin recalls,

That was the time when Katchko became very ill with a stroke, and the School was very interested in publishing... His son was a student at the School at the time. I met with Katchko a number of times. At that time we gathered together the Shabbat "Gray Book", the "Black Book", the Rosh Hashanah [book], and the Yom Kippur [book]. The Yom Kippur was the last and it's still in very sad shape.²³

²³ The Yom Kippur book has since been combined with the Rosh Hashanah book, and can be found at the back of that volume.

During his tenure at the School of Sacred Music, William Sharlin became close with Dr. Eric Werner. He was often invited to Werner's home in a social capacity. Because of his status as a Masters student, William held a unique position while he was at the College. His background seemed to stimulate Werner and Werner soon had him doing various types of research for him. Sharlin was asked to do a major study of every version of the Tal Kaddish.²⁴ He was asked by Werner to edit some of his writings. William also helped Werner with his Hebrew. They wrote numerous articles together.

When William graduated from the School of Sacred Music in 1951, Werner arranged a Fellowship for him at Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, so that he could work with him on a PhD. During the next three years [1951-1954], Sharlin was the Music Director on the Cincinnati campus. He taught an elective course for Rabbinic students on Liturgical Music which mostly dealt with Cantillation. He also led the music for worship services. The most important thing to him though, was the choir. It was a large group, composed of all male voices, and made up exclusively of Rabbinic students. Talking about it, Sharlin remarked,

I introduced a major musical culture there . Many of the people who have gone through that process with me are prominent Rabbis in the field. Joe Glaser, among others. It was quite an experience.

²⁴ A prayer chanted on the first day of Passover. It begins a special section in which God is asked for dew.

While he was the Music Director, Sharlin was also a full time student. During his time there, William took virtually every class offered at the College. His classmates included Jacob Petuchowski and Alvin Reines, both now Rabbinic faculty at H.U.C. in Cincinnati. Since he was still not married, Sharlin lived in the dormitory with most of the other students. He formed many long lasting relationships there. One of these was with Alfred Gottschalk, now President of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, who was then a young Rabbinic student.²⁵ Gottschalk, when asked his thoughts on Sharlin's impact on the Rabbinic students in Cincinnati said,

I think that he had tremendous impact because he made it possible for Rabbinic students to sing along. And he taught them a whole repertoire that they could use for the religious school and for the synagogue. The Rabbinic students came out musically literate.

Sharlin also spent his time in Cincinnati working seriously on developing his voice. He studied at the Cincinnati Conservatory. He felt that, having made the decision to be a hazzan, he had a responsibility to make the most out of what he had. He states, "I really searched; [I] tried to develop into some kind of vocalist".

One Friday afternoon, William had a chance encounter that added a whole new dimension to his life. He was sitting in

²⁵ From an interview with President Alfred Gottschalk on September 13, 1989.

the lounge at the College, when he saw Hank Skirball walking back and forth with armloads of pots and pans. Sharlin asked what was going on, and was told that they were loading a truck full of supplies for a NFTY²⁶ conclave. He offered to help load and received an invitation to come along for the weekend. This was Sharlin's first introduction to youth groups, and the beginning of what was to become a long and fruitful association. He recalls the experience,

It was my first exposure to a conclave...They had various people leading songs. I didn't really get involved [this time]...but I remember Borowitz²⁷ was a powerhouse of a songleader, and he had two or three songs that were his specialty...He used to rouse up the kids fantastically. Anyway, I did some songleading up there, and gradually, out of that world, I got very much involved with national NFTY,...leadership conclaves at Oconomowoc, Wisconsin. I went there for a number of years. I became a song leader and used guitar.²⁸

In 1954 Sharlin felt that his thesis was not progressing in the way he would have liked. He remembered his decision to leave,

I felt that I was having problems with my thesis, which was on the music of Hasidism. It was an interesting concept. But Werner was mostly in New York, and it didn't work out too well. So three years was enough. Then I got the invitation to come to Los Angeles, both from Hebrew Union College and from Leo Baeck Temple. The doctorate didn't happen.

²⁶ NFTY is National Federation of Temple Youth, the Reform youth movement.

²⁷ Eugene Borowitz is Distinguished Professor of Education and Modern Jewish Thought at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in New York.

²⁸ Information from an interview with Cantor Sharlin on January 18, 1990.

However, just as they told me to become a hazzan in New York, they said, "all you need are about three courses and you could be ordained". I chose not to.

CHAPTER THREE

In 1954, Cantor Sharlin left Cincinnati and moved to Los Angeles, California where he worked part time at Leo Baeck Temple.²⁹ It was a small synagogue at the time, with fewer than 200 families. Rabbi Leonard Beerman who was the Rabbi and Cantor Sharlin worked together there for more than thirty years. They had a warm and supportive relationship. Over the years, the congregation swelled to a membership of 650 families and is currently one of the most prestigious congregations in Southern California.³⁰ William Sharlin grew to be most beloved at Leo Baeck Temple. Besides being a cantor of the highest caliber, he was involved in all areas of congregational life. He taught music in the preschool, he taught Hebrew to adult B'nei Mitzvah, and he worked with all ages in between. William's attendance at Board and Executive Committee meetings was highly valued, as one President said, he added "his own quiet wisdom, depth, special perspective, and humanity" to the proceedings.³¹

Cantor Sharlin has his own unique perspective regarding the role of the hazzan on the bimah.³²

I didn't lead the congregation. Leading was a by-product of my communicating the material with

²⁹ From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on June 27, 1989.

³⁰ UAHC Directory of Member Congregations, 1989.

³¹ Marlene Gilbert, President of Leo Baeck Temple, at her speech on Cantor Sharlin's retirement, October 7, 1989..

³² From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on July 13, 1989.

them. Inviting them by experiencing what I wanted them to sing. I didn't take on the role of, 'I'm now leading you and my job is to lead you to get you to sing'...Of course we want them to sing. But it was as important for me to experience the song, prayer, whatever it was, myself. And I use the guitar for certain things, certain tunes, mostly at the beginning of the service. But I use the guitar in a simple way, partly because that's all I can do with the guitar, (play simply) but partly out of the concept that the guitar shouldn't overwhelm the vocal entity...All of this has to do with the question of 'Is the cantor performing a role to the congregation' or 'Is the cantor's primary role to enter into a world of t'filah him or herself?' Which automatically, in essence, has the function of bringing the congregation into the experience. You can't teach a congregation to pray, but you can expose them to a person who is praying. That's the strongest influence you could have...Praying is something that...davening... whichever form you're talking about, comes out of a cultural development".

Cantor Sharlin feels that there is a place for many kinds of musical experiences at a worship service.

It's just a simple natural thing of balance. How do you balance? I don't think that there's a simple answer. I can't tell you that here you do, here you don't. It has to do with the pacing of the service. Where a congregation is involved...They sit back and read. They listen. If their experience has been established, I'm talking about spiritual experience of some kind, the time for listening is less of a separate experience, an independent experience, but rather an extension of their own participation. It's not, "Now I stop participating and now I'm going into a listening experience," but rather the natural flow keeps the congregant in the same flow...There are so many things required for this to happen. We're talking about who you are on the pulpit, who the Rabbi is, if the Rabbi joins, or integrates him or herself into this flow. If there is fragmentation on the pulpit, there's going to be fragmentation down below as well.

At the Friday evening service on October 7, 1989, in honor of his retirement, a congregant described William Sharlin's impact on her life and that of the congregation.³³

Our most uplifting and spiritually enriching experiences here have happened with you at their core. Your liturgical music has enhanced our worship. In some instances, it may have made it possible for us to worship. Many are the Friday nights I have sat through services too tired or too stressed to really listen to the words. But the music, your music, reached me, and soothed me, and spoke to me...and finally brought forth a response from me.

During the same weekend, William was lauded by many notable clergy people. Rabbi Leonard Thal, Director of the Pacific Southwest Council of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations said that William was "a Rabbi's Rabbi", and that William has been "my teacher, my mentor, my gentle critic"³⁴. Rabbi Richard Levi, editor of On Wings of Awe, and of On Wings of Freedom, the Regional director of Southern California Hillel, spent two years at Leo Baeck Temple as an Assistant Rabbi. He said,

William prepared me for an afternoon of scratchy Yossele Rosenblatt (records) by revealing to me, as he has to so many of you, the soul of the hazzan. William's voice is very different from Rosenblatt's, but his n'shamah, his soul, grew from the same stock. When you listen to William, or talk with him about prayer, and davening, and song, you can hear the places where he and Rosenblatt were together. But the melodies that shaped them both sound very different when filtered through William's modesty

³³ From Marlene Gilbert's tribute to Cantor Sharlin at his retirement. October 7, 1989.

³⁴ From Rabbi Thal's speech about William on the occasion of his retirement, October 8, 1989.

and seriousness. They reflect his dislike of the cantorial excesses of Rosenblatt's less talented followers. And yet, William has always been a hazzan, for many of us, the hazzan. You taught me the difference between davening and singing, between listening to the hazzan's prayer and singing along. You taught me that listening is also praying. And while there are times for congregational singing, there are also times for congregational listening. A hazzan like you is not a showman. He is, she is, the essence of a shaliach tzibur³⁵: the person the congregation has chosen as its emissary to focus its prayers and gather them into a song, that can make its way from the depths of the heart into the hearts of heaven. You don't talk about God much, William, but your song abides in the heights.³⁶

Many other people paid tribute to William Sharlin that weekend, among them his old friends Cantor Sheldon Merel and Rabbi Leonard Beerman. Many of Sharlin's cantorial colleagues participated in the celebration as well.

It was shortly after his arrival at Leo Baeck Temple that William was introduced to a beautiful young concert pianist named Jackie. Rabbi Isaiah Zeldin, who William knew from his days in Cincinnati, was traveling in Arizona. Some people he met "asked him if he knew of some nice interesting guy for their niece, who lived in Los Angeles. So he brought [me] the information. I called her. We had a date. We didn't see each other for a long time [after that], but I kept sending her piano students. Then one day we got together and started

³⁵ The term shaliach tzibur means the messenger, emissary, or delegate of the congregation. It is applied to the person who recites the prayers aloud before the congregation. (Definition-Macy Nulman, Concise Encyclopedia of Jewish Music. pp.222-223)

³⁶ From Rabbi Richard Levi's speech in honor of William Sharlin's retirement, October 7, 1989.

seeing each other. That's when it all happened".

Jackie and William got married on June 6, 1958 and decided shortly thereafter to begin a family. They have two daughters, Ilana and Lisa. Both of the girls are naturally musical, but Lisa is the more active singer. She is the soloist and performs the High Holy Day music at Temple Shir Shalom, a small congregation in Los Angeles. Lisa directs the choir and takes turns singing solos with the Rabbi.

Like it was years ago when William was a child growing up in New York, the Sharlin family have Pesach seders that are grand musical experiences. Music is an integral part of all of their lives. William and his wife occasionally perform together. They have done some vocal programs, especially in Yiddish Art Song. They also have done several programs of four hands at the piano. And Jackie has actually performed some of the piano pieces that William composed during his years at the Manhattan School of Music. They are an extremely closeknit and loving family.

CHAPTER FOUR

In addition to becoming the Cantor at Leo Baeck Temple, Cantor Sharlin began teaching at the Western campus of The Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion when he arrived in Los Angeles. He was made the director of the Department of Sacred Music. He began offering a comprehensive course in Liturgical Music for Rabbinic students. Like the classes that he had taught in Cincinnati, the emphasis of the curriculum was on cantillation. It also included a solid repertoire of holiday music for children, and basic pieces for synagogue services. This course is still being taught by him at the Hebrew Union College today.

Almost immediately upon his arrival in Los Angeles, William established a program to prepare local hazzanim for certification. The Cantors who participated in this program included Robert Nadell, Saul Silverman, and Sid Bloom. All were established hazzanim. They had been serving in pulpits for a substantial period of time and had solid backgrounds. The program included a review of all aspects of liturgical music. Sharlin wanted to make sure that the candidates for certification had a thorough grasp of the six systems of cantillation. They were also required to master nusach (the prayer modes), which is a basic tool for any hazzan. At the completion of their studies, some of the candidates were required to take certification exams, and others received certification based solely on Cantor Sharlin's recommendation.

At the same time that this certification program was instituted, Sharlin began a three year course for Temple organists. He was very proud of this program. The students were very serious about their studies and were all excellent musicians.

It was a great experience. [There were] about a half a dozen organists, mostly Jews, who took this course. It opened up the whole world [to them]. I taught them liturgical Hebrew. [It was] a major program for three years. These people were the heart and core of the devoted functioning organists. The others, non-Jews, were just doing jobs and would not have been interested. Virtually all Jews attended this course and I gave them a thorough background. [We did a] total study of nusach and literature. [It was also] a Reform Workshop. These were professional musicians and we did analysis of 'Who were these people [the composers], and why did they write the way they did? What were their strengths and weaknesses?' It was very good.

There was a substantial number of small congregations in the Los Angeles area and the need for part time cantors was great. Many of the people who were filling these positions had minimal background and no formal cantorial training. When the Department of Sacred Music was formed, these soloists quickly approached the school for assistance and Cantor Sharlin became their teacher. Most of these students had other professions. Some of them tired of doing part time work and settled into their major jobs.

A number of these people decided to further pursue their cantorial studies and chose to attend the School of Sacred Music in New York. Sam Berman of Baltimore Hebrew

Congregation was one. Others of Sharlin's students who went on to attend the School of Sacred Music were Cantors Susan Berkson and Lisa Lipco. Many of Sharlin's former students were accepted into the American Conference of Cantors as Associate Members, and several received certification. These cantors are serving in many major congregations on the West Coast. One student, Cantor Richard Silverman, was not only certified, but he received his Bachelors Degree of Sacred Music from Hebrew Union College after having completed his studies with Cantor Sharlin. This was most unusual, as there was an agreement with the School of Sacred Music in New York that degrees would not be awarded from the Los Angeles Campus. But Silverman was an excellent student who had studied for years and had mastered all of the material, and so an exception was made in his case.

The cantorial course that William developed for his students in Los Angeles was taught once a week for three hours. The curriculum covered three major areas of study: cantillation, nusach, and Reform Repertoire. The materials were covered in a cycle that took between three and four years to complete. One could begin to study any time during the cycle, and continue working until they had completely studied all of the materials.

In teaching cantillation, all six systems were taught, although the emphasis was on Torah, Haftarah, the Book of Esther, and High Holy Day Cantillation. Some years, depending

on the class, all six systems were solidly mastered. Cantor Sharlin has always taught Cantillation as a punctuational as well as a musical system. The T'amim³⁷ were divided into two categories, those which are disjunctive, and those which are conjunctive. It helped his students to grasp the syntactical logic which is important when it comes to the mastery and memorization of the text.

William Sharlin has very definite ideas about the correct approach to teaching nusach.

With me, nusach, as much as I agree that the hazzan should know the complete cycle of the year for self stature, it is the quality, the usage of the nusach, nusach as an aesthetic. The spiritual entity is my direction in teaching it. It's no big deal to teach people what is the nusach for this or that. You sing the notes. I am much more interested that the students enter the heart, the spirit, the beauty of it. Which makes it much more possible for them to use it. Not just, 'Hey I'm chanting the stuff', but, 'I'm offering something beautiful that can contribute to, elevate, the t'filah'.

The Katchko materials have always been Sharlin's main resource for teaching nusach. Cantor Alan Weiner, one of Sharlin's earlier students described his classes with William. The students were given assignments of nusach to prepare. They would present their pieces and then Sharlin would critique their presentations and work with them on the music. Weiner described Sharlin's teaching style,

He was very understanding of people's level. He spoke to people at their own level. He was always

³⁷ T'amim is the term for Biblical accentuation. Macy Nulman pp.244-249.

trying to pull them up...If someone was unprepared he would say 'You have to get a little deeper into the material'.³⁸

Where nusach was concerned, Katchko was always Sharlin's favored composer. He explained his selections.

Shalosh Regalim, there is no question that Katchko is the best. While I basically use Katchko, I mix in a variety of sources of all the others. I select portions of Alter. Alter is a convenient package, but I find that too often, not always, but too often, that Alter works too hard at being original and there is a loss of fluidity. The naturalness of the nusach is lost. Katchko sometimes gets repetitive but his nusach is always pure nusach.

As the years passed, Sharlin began presenting the nusach of many other composers in his classes. He said, "It was just the natural expansion of material. I wanted to open up other sources. Just time and natural expansion." Alter's materials were more commonly used, as were those of Lind, Shnipolisky, and Schaposhnik.

Cantor Sharlin insisted that his students have a thorough grounding in all of the nusach of the year's cycle. He strongly resisted teaching major cantorial compositions in any of his classes. One reason is that he feels that in the context of t'filah, there is very little place for major cantorial works. The second reason is that too many of the cantorial compositions do not succeed, particularly in the hands or mouths of young American cantorial students. These

³⁸ From an interview with Cantor Alan Weiner on July 11, 1989.

students are too far removed from the musical culture that existed during the "Golden Age of Hazzanut."

They begin to fabricate style. I prefer to focus on more contained material...Too many of these larger pieces are rambling pieces, and the students have no musical sense of the whole thing. They end up trying to imitate the dreying, and the whining, and the sighing, which is very troubling for me. You sigh if you feel, if you have the need to sigh. You don't sigh because there is a sigh in the music. A lot of students just sigh period. They sigh because hazzanim sigh. First of all, an American student can't sound like a hazzan of the old world, period. But they can integrate some of the essences of that culture into a natural self. Hopest self. If the student were deeply..., you see most students don't hear that many hazzanim. It becomes almost an academic thing. The style of hazzanut becomes an academic thing rather than living with hazzanut.

When you live with it in a natural way, things in a natural way begin to enter your system, and you do them not because you want to produce this external sound, but because you begin to honestly experience that world.

I teach one student who starts singing stuff, and right away she's kvetching. When I ask why? The point is that she's putting an overlay onto the music where the music itself, the beauty of the music, is completely lost. And instead, there is this need to put this layer of quote-"style" on it. Which leads, to me [that], the ultimate of the experience is being very forced, unnatural, phony. It makes no sense for me to hear.

Some people get up to do the Torah B'rachot³⁹ and start emphasizing all over the place. A real hazzan is not going to do that. The idea is to get those words to have meaning to you, the nusach is meaningful to you. Forget about this role 'I have to be a hazzan'. You'll be a better hazzan. And the more you expose yourself to the culture, the more of that essence will naturally come through."

³⁹ The Torah B'rachot are the blessings that are recited before and after the chanting of Torah.

Sharlin's approach to teaching repertoire has always been chronological. He starts with the time of Rossi as the earliest period of composition, and then proceeds through the West European Schools, the German Schools, the East European Schools, to the American scene, which has produced the largest mass of material for the reform movement. He doesn't usually deal with camp or NFTY music, but if there is time, Sharlin will include short units on hassidic music, Israeli folk music of the pioneer period (the 30's and 40's), or children's songs. Cantor Sharlin remarked, "I generally shy away from the 'pop' world. They'll get it and use it, I know, but I only occasionally give them something if I feel it's good musically." Sharlin's students receive weekly repertoire assignments that they must prepare to perform and discuss in class. The class size varies, usually between five and eight students per class. William Sharlin is perhaps best known for this work that he has done to train people who serve as cantors in Southern California. As Cantor Alan Weiner, said,

He's influenced a whole generation of cantors and temple musicians...Or maybe two generations, on the West Coast. Also, he's had contact with years and years of Rabbinic students at the School (Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion) and I thank God for that, because a bunch of Rabbis now have an idea of the contribution a cantor can make, because they might have grown up in a congregation without that. They have learned about the breadth of possibilities for what can be done in a service.

I think he just stands for the best, all the time.⁴⁰

Weiner's sentiment is echoed by a large number of Cantor Sharlin's cantorial colleagues. He has been honored by them at a number of conferences, concerts, and dinners.

⁴⁰ From an interview with Cantor Alan Weiner, July 11, 1989.

CHAPTER FIVE

Always a lover of music, Cantor Sharlin has been impressed and influenced by many different composers during his life.⁴¹ Without a doubt, Mozart is the composer he admires most. He has a lot of respect for the works of Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, and Stravinski as well. When asked his opinion about the composers of Jewish music that he appreciated the most, Sharlin noted Weinberg first. He feels that Weinberg is sophisticated and interesting, and his music has a Jewishness, a certain ethnic quality. He added that as good a composer as Weinberg was, his music was often too sophisticated to be easily appreciated, and therefore was not used very much.

William then said that Helfman was an important composer because he had great imagination and he was deeply immersed in the tradition. He commented that Helfman's greatest strength was that he didn't write Jewish music from the outside. He wrote it from the inside.

Composers by and large are either composers who come from the outside into the synagogue, or who are in the synagogue who come out of the synagogue. Meaning [that] they come out doing more creative things (Binder for example).

Helfman was a man who came out of the synagogue and he was a trained musician. Not as crafted as he could have been. Not as studied. Not as deeply crafted as he could have been. But so talented that the important works that were published had a great deal of good craft and imagination. His material [was good and so were], certain things of Maurice

⁴¹ Unless otherwise noted, the information presented in this chapter is from an interview with Cantor Sharlin on July 13, 1989.

Goldman, when Maurice Goldman was turned on. Maurice Goldman had problems with the synagogue. He didn't always write because of love for the synagogue. He had a love-hate relationship. But there were things that he wrote that were inspired.

That's another point. Helfman's material was inspirational. Because he comes out [of the Synagogue], he has a sense of what t'filah is. As against people who wrote, for example, like Freed. Freed was an excellent composer but you could always tell that he was an outsider, basically, who came into it. He did a lot of very excellent material, but some of it with a stiffness, an unnaturalness. [He] uses traditional material but he uses it in a way different than Helfman would use it. So that's the insider and the outsider.

Binder was an insider and worked very hard at being an outsider as well. That is, he too could have studied much more seriously at composition. Because he often tried too hard to be the composer. That was Binder. Of course you can't exclude people like Bloch. They are important composers on the outside looking in.

When asked which composers he thought might have inspired him or affected his style, Cantor Sharlin was uncertain. He replied, "Helfman if anybody. I find there are certain characteristics if I stop to think about it. His need to reach out for coloration...Definitely."

Sharlin, of course, sees himself as an insider with respect to his composing. The cantorial idiom is an integral part of who he is as a composer.

You have to be aware that existing in my musical fiber is my deep background in the synagogue as a child. I don't take and use ideas. It comes naturally out of the storehouse of my vocabulary.

As has been stated previously, William Sharlin was arranging music for his brothers and sister while still a

child.⁴² He began his serious composing while studying composition at the Manhattan School of Music. He produced a number of piano pieces during this period.

Although he had done some work in sketching out cantorial accompaniments while working towards Investiture at the School of Sacred Music in New York, it was not until he moved to Cincinnati that Sharlin actually began focusing on composing and arranging liturgical pieces for choir and soloists. The choir he worked with was made up of Rabbinic students, all male voices. William considered it a fine group, but because all the singers were men, the range of the music was limited. A few of those early works are still in use, especially S'u Sh'arim [See Appendix A p. 45] The composition is one of Cantor Sharlin's favorites. Sharlin has since reworked it, and he prefers it to be sung by a trio of women.

It's a short piece, and very wonderful for going up to the ark on Festivals or Ne'ilah⁴³. Or just going up to the ark if you use S'u Sh'arim for the Torah service. And that piece already indicated my involvement with Baroque and polyphony because it is all imitative. All the voices imitate each other. It's an interesting piece.

Cantor Sharlin has done an impressive amount of arranging during his career. According to him there is a vast

⁴² From an interview with Cantor Sharlin on June 27, 1989.

⁴³ Ne'ilah is the closing service on Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement.

difference between setting a work and arranging it. He feels that arranging is a lower level of creativity, whereas setting a piece is taking it and going further with it than the piece itself would normally suggest. He feels it is crucial to respect the piece that is being worked on for what it is, and not to simply exploit it for what he wants to do with it.

That's the key thing. On the one hand, you are exploiting it...I guess the objective is to create a partnership between the original material and my reaction to it. My reaction can be very imaginative, but the piece itself is always there in the fore.

Cantor Sharlin then went on to say that adding color is a major part of his approach to setting a piece. His arrangement of Yedid Nefesh [See Appendix p. 46] is a good example of this. He took a simple tune, and colored it by adding unusual chords. His objective was to "give it a more transcendent (quality). It is transformed". The idea was to take what was already beautiful and to bring it "into another world". In setting Mi Pi El [See Appendix p. 47] Sharlin used polyphony and turned the straight forward melody into a light madrigal. It is now contrapuntal and the coloring of the piece has been totally reworked from what it was originally.

Another device often used by Cantor Sharlin in his setting of existing material is his creation of accompaniments that can stand independently. According to Sharlin, this is a way of "deepening the experience, and giving more different

dimensions to the music". In the Hassidic Sim Shalom [See Appendix p. 48], for example, the piano part is a composition in its own right, and can be played by itself, perhaps as a meditation before the piece is sung. The accompaniment to Yom Zeh Mechubad [See Appendix p. 49] can also function independently. "It has multifunctional possibilities. You could use it in many different ways". The part is written for piano and flute but the flute line could easily be turned into another voice part.

Sharlin sees the setting or arranging of an existing piece as...

...Taking it into different places...It's like giving something a fresh coat of paint. [For example] a house, the same house...creating a new concept of color in this house. It makes it very different from what it was. We struggled with it. We didn't leave it up to the decorator. We had to argue with it.

As was demonstrated with Yedid Nefesh and Mi Pi El, William often takes a familiar tune and adds colors in the form of other voices harmonizing the melody. There is a reason for this approach. At Leo Baeck Temple, a professional choir participated regularly in the worship service. William found that this often intimidated his congregants and discouraged them from singing along. By utilizing familiar melodies, he encouraged his congregants to participate. Then, when they felt comfortable with a piece, he would add harmony parts for his professional choir to sing. The congregation soon began to understand that they had an integral role to

play in creating the music of the service. If they did not sing, there would be no melody.

As the years passed, Cantor Sharlin became aware that professional choirs were rapidly being replaced by volunteer choirs in most Reform synagogues. He began to create what he terms "Gebrauchsmusik," that is, music which is accessible to both the listener and the performer. Included in this collection are pieces in which a familiar text is set to a tune that is also familiar, for example, putting the words of Oseh Shalom to the tune of We Shall Overcome [See Appendix p. 50].

William Sharlin composed and arranged music for many different performers. Some of his favorite pieces were written for young people. Aside from working with his professional group during his years at Leo Baeck, he had the opportunity to conduct some very fine youth choirs. May the Time Not Be Distant [See Appendix p. 51], one of his best known works, was actually written to be performed by a group of teenagers there.

William soon discovered that children were capable of mastering fairly difficult music if it was presented to them in the right way. He challenged them to learn contrapuntal pieces and found that if each part was written and taught as a melody line, the young singers had few problems mastering even complicated parts. He was excited at the prospect of them singing "real music," and not just double thirds.

Editing unwieldy compositions has been another of William's many projects. He has reshaped a number of major cantorial works and "put them into a controllable, logical form." A prime example of this kind of work would be William's setting of Eylu D'varim [See Appendix p. 52] by Rappaport. This was a project that had actually begun in Cantorial School. He had sketched an accompaniment for the piece while working with one of his co-students. The composition wasn't working for his classmate so William cut it down. Many years later he completed the task that he had begun. "I condensed. I took the essences. I reduced. The harmonies came out of my own imagination because color is an important part". Now the Eylu D'varim has become almost an art song.

CHAPTER SIX

Over the years William Sharlin has written and arranged a vast number of pieces, ranging in style and size from simple little ditties to major choral and orchestral works. In 1972, when Alfred Gottschalk became the fifth President of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, he asked his old friend William to compose the music for the service of inauguration. When asked why he chose Sharlin to be the composer, President Gottschalk said, "He's a good friend, and the best musician I know". The two men had worked together for many years at HUC-JIR in Los Angeles.⁴⁴

Cantor Sharlin collaborated with Dr. Eugene Mihaly, Professor of Midrash from the HUC-JIR campus in Cincinnati, on creating the liturgy for the extra-ordinary event. It took place on February 24, 1972, at 10 o'clock in the morning, at the Plum Street Temple in Cincinnati. It was a solemn and dramatic ceremony⁴⁵.

Seder Limsirat Torah, the Service for Transmission of Torah was a large-scale work written for all-male choir, soloists, brass choir, harp, organ, and guitars. Cantor Howard Stahl, who was the president of the student body of the School of Sacred Music at the time, was invited to sing a duet

⁴⁴ From an interview with President Alfred Gottschalk on September 13, 1989. Dr. Gottschalk was first the administrator of the HUC-JIR Los Angeles campus, and then succeeded Rabbi Isaiah Zeldin as the dean.

⁴⁵ The American Israelite, March 30, 1972. Special Supplement.

with Cantor Sharlin during the service⁴⁶. Reminiscing about the event he said,

It was a tremendous experience and a great honor. There were only two of us. Bill, the invested cantor, and me, the only student. I was astounded to be there. They flew me out and paid my expenses. They really treated me with respect. I flew out a few days early. And for three or four days Bill worked with me and the student choir. [Which consisted of] all Rabbinic students and some ringers. Working on the Eylu D'varim [See Appendix p. 53] he duet he sang with Sharlin) was a spiritual experience. It's a Talmudic dialogue, and he made the piece come alive.

I remember gathering in the robing room, Bill standing on a chair and teaching Ashreinu and Shma to all the people. There were mostly Rabbis, hundreds of people in full academic regalia. When it was time to sing that piece in the service, the room exploded with sound. I got goosebumps. Although it was not a complex work, the Service worked fantastically.

It was Cantor Sharlin who called President Gottschalk to the Torah. He also chanted the Mi Sheberach.⁴⁷ Cantor Stahl attributes his being invited to participate in the ceremony to the fact that William was close to Gottschalk. It easily could have been a strictly Rabbinic event, except for the fact that William was so respected by the new president.

Stahl also thinks that conversations which took place between himself and Gottschalk that week may have helped set the precedent for the way the graduates of the School of Sacred Music were treated at ensuing Ordination-Investiture

⁴⁶ From and interview with Cantor Howard Stahl on March 6, 1990.

⁴⁷ Mi Sheberach is a prayer which asks God's blessing to be bestowed on an individual.

Services.

Until Gottschalk became president, the cantorial students were invested en masse. Gottschalk invested my class individually. This set the whole tone for his relationship with the Cantorial School. If Bill were not a cantor, and Bill hadn't been a participant in the Inauguration Service, I wouldn't have been included, and the whole thing would have been a Rabbinic function.

Creating a service that was both accessible to a non-professional choir and appropriate for such a dramatic occasion was something easily managed by Cantor Sharlin. For portions of the service he used his old technique of taking a familiar tune and layering it with new colors and textures. He added vocal lines and arresting instrumental parts to accomplish this. Turning the Oseh Shalom by Nurit Hirsch [See Appendix p. 54] into a march is one vivid example of this transforming process.

The themes in Seder Limsirat Torah are simple, and recurring. The primary fragment is part of a minor scale that begins the processional, Pitchu Li [See Appendix p. 55] 'd','e','e','f','g'. It is sequenced and developed many different ways throughout the service. Cantor Sharlin believes that the simpler the motives, the more creative the composer can be with those motives. The more complex or rich a motive is, the less it avails itself for development.

The setting of the V'ahavta [See Appendix p. 56] uses another of Sharlin's favorite devices. In this selection, he simply sets the traditional Torah cantillation to harp

accompaniment. The harp plays an arpeggiated version of the original theme presented in Pitchu Li, this time in the form of an ostinato. This theme also recurs in the dialogue for two cantors, Eylu D'varim.

Two years after the Inauguration Service, William Sharlin composed the Shabbat Suite, a work in four movements. The Suite was first performed in Long Beach, California, where it had been commissioned, and then at Lincoln Center in New York, where it received excellent reviews. Perhaps the most well known portion of this work is Shalom Aleichem [See Appendix p. 57]. An excerpt of this piece has been published separately and has become fairly popular in Jewish settings throughout the country.

Perhaps the most challenging work William Sharlin has produced is the Shabbat Service in Round, Canon, and Mystery. This service was written for professional choir and chamber orchestra. Although there are some portions of the service that were written accessibly so that the congregation could participate, like the Barchu and the Shma, most of the choir parts are difficult and require excellent musicianship on the part of the singers.

As is implied by its name, this work is mostly polyphonic.

I'm fascinated by canons and rounds. The challenge [is] to be able to write canons not just in unison or at the octave, but in the fifth or the fourth. You try writing a canon on the third. You'll see what a challenge that is. You're writing it in two different keys. The V'shamru of this

service is based on a canon on the third.

The theme of that V'shamru as well as that of the L'cha Dodi [See Appendix p. 58], and several other pieces in the service is a scale fragment like that used in the Gottschalk Service, but this time the tones are 'd', 'eb', 'eb', 'f', 'g'.

In recent years, Cantor Sharlin has composed a number of very accessible pieces for cantor and choir. He has written two new versions of Sim Shalom [See Appendix p. 59 and 60] which can also be sung using the Mi Chamocho text. One of these pieces is a simple two part canon which uses an ostinato chord progression in the accompaniment, not unlike the one already mentioned above in the V'ahavta. The second piece is more difficult but still approachable by an amateur choir. It has a refreshing new melody and once learned is impossible to stop humming. In the same category is Sharlin's new Elohai N'shama.

Cantor Sharlin has also written a number of solo pieces for Cantor. The one most recently published (In 1987) is the V'shamru [See Appendix p. 61]. To Sharlin, this work symbolizes

The tensions between fixed accompaniment, a composed, inflexible, ostinato-like accompaniment, and our tradition of free flowing improvisation.

In the creation of the V'shamru Cantor Sharlin started with an idea. The piece is basically designed on the fifth. He enjoys developing a concept first and then challenging himself

to follow the guidelines he has established. In the V'shamru the challenge was to fit the free flowing melody line into the structure of the accompaniment.

Often Cantor Sharlin is inspired by circumstances to compose something on the "spur of the moment". This was the case with the writing of his most recent solo composition, R'fa'eynu [See Appendix p. 62]. In March of 1989, Cantor Sharlin spent a month in residence on the Jerusalem Campus of HUC-JIR. While there he worked with the first year cantorial students on a regular basis. One of the students, Sarah Pscheidt, was looking for an anthem to sing after a sermon on healing. She was having little success and went to Cantor Sharlin for suggestions. He could think of nothing appropriate for the occasion and so he composed a setting for the prayer for healing that is in the "Amidah". Many think that this is one of his best works.

CONCLUSION

The American Conference of Cantors recently paid tribute to William and his life's work at their 1988 National Convention, where he was invited to speak and selections of his music were presented by a group of his colleagues.. The West Coast Chapter of the ACC is sponsoring the publication of a collection of Cantor Sharlin's materials.

In recent years he has also had an increasing connection to the School of Sacred Music. In March of 1989, he guest taught at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem for a month, and in October of 1989, he was the Musical Scholar-in-Residence at the School of Sacred Music in New York. These opportunities to participate in the educating of young cantors are especially fulfilling to him.

Although Cantor Sharlin has always been held in high esteem in cantorial circles, he is now becoming more and more well known amongst the Rabbis and lay people of the Reform Movement. He is being invited with increasing frequency to serve as Cantorial Scholar-in-Residence at UAHC congregations throughout the country. The rabbinic students to whom he has taught repertoire and cantillation are now serving in pulpits across the United States and Canada and they are carrying their memories of Cantor Sharlin with them.

Cantor, teacher, composer, arranger, spiritual leader, and mentor of many, Cantor William Sharlin has had an impact

on the musical and spiritual expression of American Jewry
matched by few of his contemporaries.

APPENDIX A - MUSIC

Se'u, She'arim

45

Wm. Sharlin

Agitato

S. *p* *c*
 Se-u she-a-rim — ra-she-chem u-se-
 (organ)

I *pp*
 u — pit-che o — lam — ve-ya — vo —
 II *p*
 Se-u she-a-rim
 III

I *pp*
 ve-ya — vo —
 II *mp*
 ra-she-chem u-se-u pit-che o — lam — ve-ya —
 III

I *vo*
 ve-ya-vo
 II *vo*
 ve-ya-vo
 III *mf*
 Se-u she-a-rim ra-she-chem u-se-u pit-che o-lam

Y'DID NEFESH

E.S. Zweig 46

arr: W. Sharlin

Em Am Cm Em

ye - did ne - fesh av ha - ra - cha man - ye - did ne - fesh

Am D Am B7 Em C Am

av ha - ra - cha man me - shoch av - d' - cha el re -

me - shoch el re -

D G E Am B7 Em

tzo - ne - cha me - shoch av - d' - cha la la la

tzo - ne - cha me - shoch

C F#m B7 Em Am Cm G

la la la el - re - tzo - ne - cha ya - rutz av - d' -

ya - rutz - av - d' -

Em Am D7 G Em Am B7 Em

cha ke - mo - a - yal yish - ta - cha - ve la la la la la

cha ke - mo - a - yal a - yal yish - ta - cha - ve la la la la la

C F#m B7 Em

la la la el mul ha - da - re - cha

la la la el mul ha - da - re - cha

Mi Pi - El

Partos - Sharlin

Refrain

A.  Mi - Pi EL u - mi - Pi EL ye - vo - rach Kol

T.  Mi - Pi - El u - mi - Pi EL ye - vo -

 Mi - Pi EL ye - vo - rach Kol

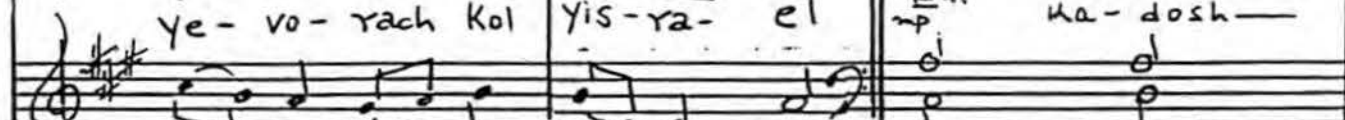
 yis - ra - el Mi - Pi EL u - mi - Pi EL

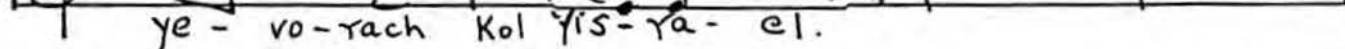
 rach Kol yis - ra - el u - mi - Pi EL


 yis - ra - el Mi - Pi EL

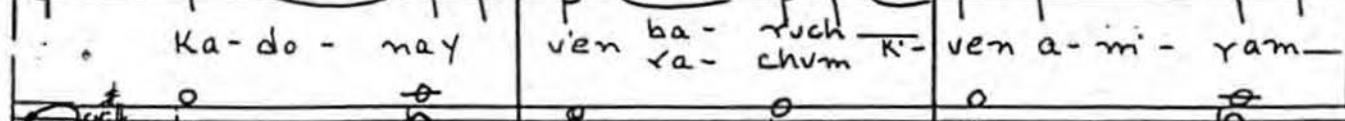
Fine (Cantor)

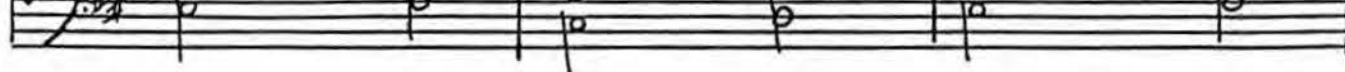
 ye - vo - rach Kol yis - ra - el

 ye - vo - rach Kol yis - ra - el

 a - dir ka - dosh

 Ka - do - nay ven ba - ruch ven a - mi - ram

 Ka - do - nay ven ba - ruch ven a - mi - ram

 Ka - do - nay ven ba - ruch ven a - mi - ram

 en o' - do - la - ka - to - ra ven d' - gu - llim K' yis - ra - el

 en o' - do - la - ka - to - ra ven d' - gu - llim K' yis - ra - el

 en o' - do - la - ka - to - ra ven d' - gu - llim K' yis - ra - el

Refrain

Peacefully

Sim ShalomWm. Sharlin
after a
Chassidic Niggun

S. *p*
Sim — — — sha-lom to — —

A. *mp*
Sim — sha-lom to - va uv'-ra - cha

T. *mp*
B. Sim sha-lom to - va uv'-ra - cha sha -

S. *I II*
va — — — v - ve - ra - cha — — — cha — —

A. *I II*
sim — — — sha — — — lom — — — lom — — —

T. *I II*
B. lom to - va v re-ra-cha — — — cha — —

Moderato

Yom Ze Mechubadmelody - Melamed
Setting - Sharlin

mp ①

yom ze me-chu - bad mi - Kol — ya -

④

mim Ki vo sha - vat tzur o - - la -

③

mt.
mim she-shet ya - mim ta-a-se me-lach-te-

mf

mf

Ose Shalom (We Shall Overcome) 50

art: W. Shatlin

1. p
2. pr

O - se sha - lom

O - se sha - lom sha - lom

O-se sha-lom. bim - ho... mav bim - ro -

o - se sha-lom lom bim - ro

o - se sha-lom bim - ho -

O - se sha-lom o - se - sha-lom bim - ro -

mav bim-to-mav hu ya - a - se sha - lom

mav hu ya - a -

mav hu ya - a - se sha -

lom se sha-lom a - le - nu

lom sha - lom ve - im - ru

lom sha - lom ve - im -

im - ru A - men.

A - ve-im - ru A - men.

A - men.

Andantino

mp

May the

p

time not be dis - tant O Lord _____ May the

mp

May the time not be dis - tant O

time not be dis - tant O Lord, _____ when Thy nameshall be wor-shipped in

Lord _____ O Lord, _____ when Thy name shall be wor-shipped in

52

Handwritten musical score for a piece titled "Vissal-mud to-to". The score is written on three staves. The top staff is a single melodic line in treble clef, starting with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat) and a common time signature (C). The middle staff is a piano accompaniment in treble clef, also in two flats, featuring a "Poco rit" (Poco ritardando) marking and a "non arpegg." (non arpeggiato) instruction. The bottom staff is a piano accompaniment in bass clef, also in two flats, providing harmonic support with chords and single notes. The music is written in a simple, handwritten style with some corrections and annotations.

Eylu D'vareem

Freely within pulse structure $\text{♩} = 46$

(dialogue for two Cantors)

mp *mp*

Ey-lu d'vo-rim she-en lo - hem

Ey-lu d'-vo-rim she-en lo - hem shi - ur; ha -

mp Introduction Ad Libitum

shi - ur; ha - pe - o v' - ha - bi - ku - rim v' - ho -

pe - o v' - ha - bi - ku - rim v' - ho - ra - a - yon

- ra - a - yon u - g' - mi - lus cha - so

- ug - mi - lus cha - so - dim v' - sal

Oseh Shalom

Moderato $\text{♩} = 108$

High *pp* (alla marcia) Pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa pa

Medium *p* Sha - lom sha - lom sha - lom

Low *mf* O - se sha-lom bim-ro - mav hu ya-a-se sha-lom a -

mp

pa pa pa pa pa pa pa - rom pa pa pa - rom pa-rom pa-rom pa pa

sha - lom sha - lom sha - lom

ley - nu ve - al kol Yis-ra - el

Processional - Pitchu Li

JOY AND SOLEMNITY ♩ = 80

The musical score is written for piano in 4/4 time, with a tempo of 80 beats per minute. It consists of six systems of music. The first system is marked *mp* (mezzo-piano). The second system is marked *mf* (mezzo-forte). The third system is marked *f* (forte). The fourth system is marked *f* (forte). The fifth system is marked *f* (forte). The sixth system is marked *p* (piano) and is labeled 'STATELY'.

mp

mf

f

f

f

p STATELY

Ve'ahavta

QUIET CHANT $\text{♩} = 70$

CHOIR (Unio)

Ve - a -

- hav - ta eyt A - do - nay E - lo - he - cha b' - chol le - vav -

cha - uv - chol naf - sh' - cha uv - chol m' - o - de - cha v' - ha -

SHALOM ALEYCHEM

for mixed choir a-capella

WILLIAM SHARLIN

With spirit (♩=80)

Sopr. Alto

p

Sha-lom a-ley-chem a-ley-chem sha-lom,
 chu-ni l'-sha-lom l'-sha-lom bar-chu mal-a-chey (mal)-mal-a-chey e-l'-yon,

Ten.

p

Sha-lom a-ley-chem a-ley-chem sha-lom,
 chu-ni l'-sha-lom l'-sha-lom bar-chu mal - mal-mal-a-chey e-l'-yon,

Bass

p

Sopr. Alto

p

mi se-lech ma-l' - chey ha-m'-la-chim ha - ka-dosh ba - ruch

Ten.

p

mi se-lech ma-l' - chey ha-m'-la-chim ha - ka-dosh ba - ruch

Bass

p

mi se-lech ma-l' - chey ha-m'-la-chim ha - ka-dosh, ha - ka-dosh ba - ruch

Sopr. Alto

p

hu. Ba-r' - hu. Bo-a-chem l'-sha-lom mal-a-

Ten.

p

hu. Ba-r' - hu. Bo-a-chem l'-sha-lom mal-a-

Bass

p

Lecha Dodi

Wm. Sharlin 58

Handwritten musical score for "Lecha Dodi" by Wm. Sharlin, page 58. The score is written for Soprano (S), Alto (A), Tenor (T), Bass (B), and Piano (P).

First System:

- Soprano (S):** Le-cha do-di liK hat-ka-la Pe-ne sha-bat ne-ka-bi-
- Alto (A):** (Silent)
- Tenor (T):** (Silent)
- Bass (B):** (Silent)
- Piano (P):** Accompaniment with chords and melodic lines.

Second System:

- Soprano (S):** la ni-ka-bi-la li-chu-do-di
- Alto (A):** bat ni-ka-bi-la
- Tenor (T):** bat ne-ka-bi-la
- Bass (B):** ne-ka-be-la
- Piano (P):** Accompaniment with chords and melodic lines.

Third System:

- Soprano (S):** (Silent)
- Alto (A):** (Silent)
- Tenor (T):** (Silent)
- Bass (B):** (Silent)
- Piano (P):** Accompaniment with chords and melodic lines.

Moderato con moto

Sim Shalom

lom Sharlin

1. Unison
2. Canon

p Sim-sha-lom to-va u-ve-ra-cha

mp Sim-sha-lom to-va u-ve-ra-cha

chen-va-chesed ra-cha-mim.

chen-va-chesed ve-ra-cha-mim

mf A-le-nu ve-al kol yis-ra-el ve-al kol kol ha-a-mim

mf A-le-nu ve-al kol yis-ra-el ve-al kol kol ha-a-mim

Moderato-con moto

Sim Shalom

Wm. Sharlin

S *p* SIM SHA - LOM - - SIM - TO - VA - - UV -

A *mp* SIM SHA - LOM - TO - VA UV - RA - CHA CHEN VA CHE - - SED VE -

T *p* SIM SHA - LOM TO - VA U - VE -

S RA - CHA - - CHEN - - VA - CHE - SED VE - RA - CHA - MIM

A RA - CHA - MIM A - LE - NUVE - AL - KOL YIS - RA - EL

T RA - CHA - - CHEN - - VA - CHE - SED VE - RA - CHA - MIM

S *I* AL KOL YIS - RA - EL - A - ME - - CHA - *Poco Rit.*

A A - - ME - - CHA *Poco Rit.*

T AL KOL YIS - RA - RA - EL - A - ME - - CHA -

S *III* AL KOL YIS - RA - EL *Rit.*

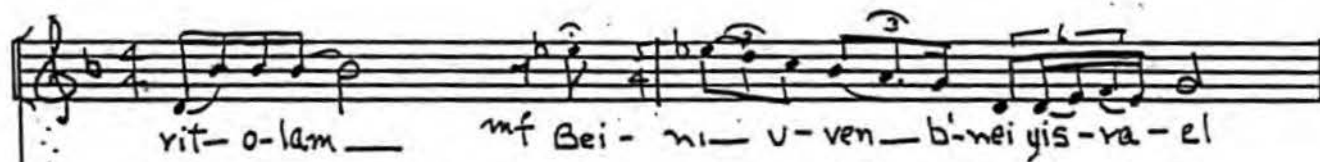
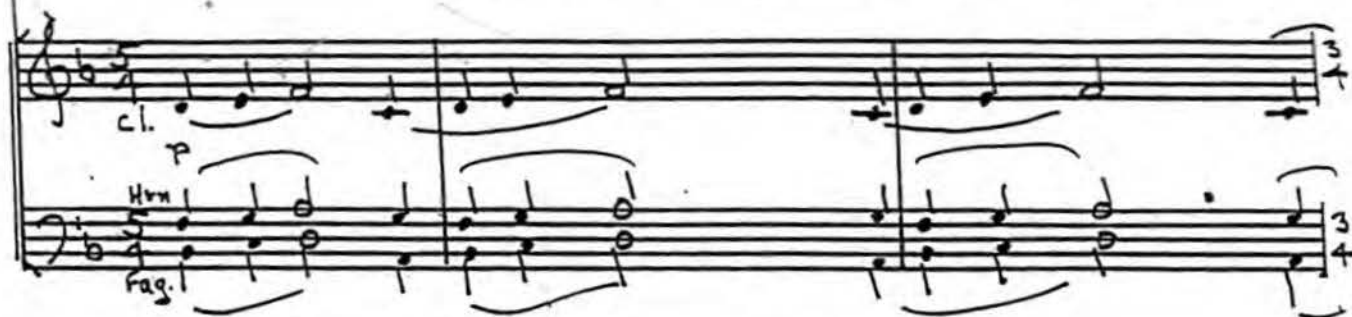
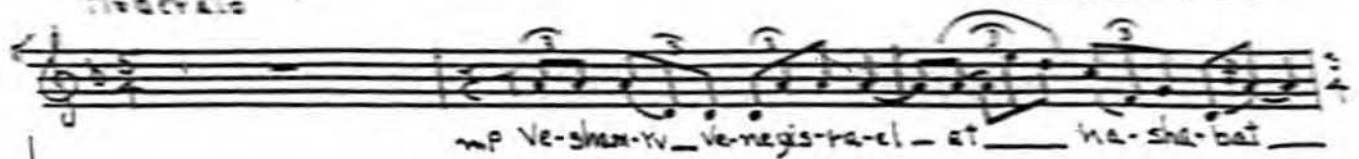
A A - - ME - - CHA. *Rit.*

T AL KOL YIS - - RA - EL

Veshevin

Moderato

Om Sharin



APPENDIX B - WORKING CATALOGUE

THE WORKS OF CANTOR WILLIAM SHARLIN

A WORKING CATALOGUE

These works are catalogued in seven separate categories:

- 1) A separate listing of works which have been published
- 2) Settings, which are arrangements, adaptations, and/or elaborations of existing pieces
- 3) Compositions, which are original short works
- 4) Major works, which are original works of longer length
- 5) The Shabbat Suite. a suite of four movements
- 6) T'filat Limsirat Torah, the service for the Inauguration of President Alfred Gottschalk of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion
- 7) Shabbat Service in Round, Canon, and Mystery

Note: The pieces graded at the "EASY" level are singable by amateur congregational choirs in three rehearsals or less. Those marked "MOD or MODERATE" are also singable by amateur choirs, but they will take a number of rehearsals. The pieces marked DIFFICULT will probably need a professional choir.

The accompaniments noted here are the ones included in the music. Often a selection marked "A CAPELLA" needs accompaniment. Most of the time a keyboard doubling of the choral parts will be sufficient.

Voicing - Abbreviations

S - Soprano	M - Male voices
A - Alto	H.M.L -High, Medium, Low
T - Tenor	
B - Bass	

PUBLISHED WORKS⁴⁸

Eylu D'varim	Duet	Keyboard	Difficult
May the Time Not Be Distant	2 Voice	Piano	Easy
Oseh Shalom(Hirsch)	H.M.L.	Organ	Easy
Shalom Aleichem	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Shalom Aleichem	SATB	Chords	Moderate
Shir Hashirim(Cantillation)	Solo(HorM)	Keyboard	Moderate
T'filat Limsirat Torah ⁴⁹	H.M.L.	Organ, Brass Harp, Guitar	Moderate
V'shamru	Cantor	Keyboard	Moderate
Yom Zeh L'yisrael	SATB	Keyboard	Mod/dif

⁴⁸All works published by Transcontinental Music Publications, with the exception of "May the Time Not Be Distant," which was published by Merritt Music Press in 1972, and "Shalom Aleichem", which was published in 1973 by New Horizon Music Publications..

There is also a collection of two-part pieces by Cantor Sharlin awaiting publication in the near future.

⁴⁹ This service is also listed separately in section six of this working catalogue.

SETTINGS

<u>PIECE</u>	<u>VOICING</u>	<u>ACCOMP</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Ana Bechoach(hassidic nigun)	C-SATB	Organ	Mod
Amar Rabi Yehudah(A.Nof)	H.M.L.	Harp, flute	Easy
Bagina(Ravina)	Duo-SATB	A cappella	Easy
Baruch Adonai Bayom(Alman)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Der Fidler(Wolowitz)	Duet(SA)	Piano, viola	Mod
Dodi Li(Sher)	SA	Chords	Easy
Eliyahu Hanavi(folk)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Eliyahu Hanavi(folk)	S.B.	Chords	Mod
Esa Eynai(Ephros)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Esa Eynai(Ephros)	C-SATB	Keyboard	Mod
Eyle Chamda Libi(hassidic)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Eylu D'vorim(Rappaport)	C	Keyboard	Dif
Eyn Keloheynu(R. Segal)	2 voice	A cappella	Easy
Go Down Moses(spiritual)	SATB	A cappella	Mod
Hadevora(Miron)	Solo-SATB	A cappella	Easy
Haven Yakir Li(yeshiva melody)	C-SATB	Keyboard	Mod
Hiney Ma Tov(hassidic)	SSA	A cappella	Easy
Hineni(Shaposhnik)	C-SATB	A cappella	Mod
Ish Chasid Haya(nigun)	SAM	A cappella	Easy
L'cha Dodi(Zeira)	SSA	A cappella	Easy
L'hadlik Ner(Rosh Hashanah)	C	Organ	Easy
Ma Tovu(Bach)	SATB	A cappella	Mod
Mi Barechev(Pugatchov)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Mi Barechev(Pugatchov)	SSA	Chords	Mod

Mi Barechev(Pugatchov)	SATB	Piano	Mod
Mi Zeh Hidlik	SAM	A cappella	Mod
Mipi El	SATB	A cappella	Easy
Nad Ned	SATB	A cappella	Eas/mod
Oseh Shalom(Alman)	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Oseh Shalom(High Holy Day)	SAM	Chords	Eas/Mod
Oseh Shalom(We Shall Overcome)	SATB	A cappella	Eas/mod
Oseh Shalom(Strangest Dream)	SATB	A cappella	Easy
Sachkee(Shlonsky)	C-SAM	A cappella	Mod
Se Ug'dee(Valbe)	SA(A)	A cappella	Eas/mod
Shir Hashirim(oriental)	C-SATB	A cappella	Mod
Shirey Zamar Noded(folktune)	4 voices	A cappella	Eas/mod
Sisu Et Yerushalayim(Nof)	2 voice	Chords	Eas/mod
V'shamru(A.Goldberg)	C-SAM	A cappella	Eas/mod
V'zot Hatorah	2 voice	Chords	Easy
Yedid Nefesh(Zweig)	2 voice	Chords	Eas/mod
Yedid Nefesh(Zweig)	opt.3rd voice SATB	A cappella	Mod
Yom Zeh Mechubad	Solo	Piano, flute	Easy

COMPOSITIONS

<u>PIECE</u>	<u>VOICING</u>	<u>ACCOMPANIMENT</u>	<u>DIFFICULTY</u>
Ahavat Olam(Sanders)	Cantor	Chords	Moderate
Aleynu	Cantor	Keyboard	Moderate
Ani Ma'amin	SATB	A cappella	Moderate
Avinu Malkenu	SAM	A cappella	Moderate
Baruch Ha'or	2 Voice	Chords	Easy
Elohai Neshama	C-SATB	A cappella	Mod/dif
Hashkivenu(Rozumni)	Cantor	Chords	Moderate
Hayom Katzer	SATB	A cappella	Difficult
Ki Hem Chayenu-Ahavat Olam	2 Voice	Chords	Easy
Kol Sason	2 voice	Organ	Easy
Mi Chamocha	C-SAM	A cappella	Easy
Mi Chamocha(canon)	C-SATB	Keyboard	Easy
Psalm 23(Eylu D'varim)	Duet	Keyboard	Difficult
P'tach Lanu Sha'ar	C-SATB	Chords	Mod/Dif
Refa'eynu	Cantor	Chords	Moderate
S'u Sh'arim	SSA	Organ	Moderate
Shabbat Shalom	2 voice	Keyboard	Easy
Sim Shalom(hassidic nigun)	SAM	Keyboard	Easy
Sim Shalom	C-SATB	A cappella	Mod/dif
Sim Shalom(canon)	C-SATB	Keyboard	Easy
Trees(Allepo folk tune)	SATB	Piano	Easy
Tsor Te'udah(round)	3vc.Round	Keyboard	Easy
Va'ani Tefilati	SATB	Keyboard (clar,hrn,fag)	Easy
Zachor-Shamor	Cantor	Chords	Moderate

MAJOR WORKS

<u>PIECE</u>	<u>VOICING</u>	<u>ACCOMPANIMENT</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Hodu Ladonai	SATB	Organ	Moderate
Sha'alu-After Borodo	C-SATB	A cappella	Mod/dif
Va'ani Zot B'riti	SATB	Keyboard	Difficult
Ve'ata Yisrael	4 Soli-SATB	Keyboard	Difficult

SHABBAT SUITE

This work was first performed in Long Beach, California, where it was commissioned. The "Musica Hebraica" then performed it at Lincoln Center in 1974, where it received excellent reviews.

<u>PIECE</u>	<u>VOICING</u>	<u>ACCOMPANIMENT</u>	<u>LEVEL</u>
Shalom Aleichem	SATB	Keyboard	Moderate
Yom Zeh L'Yisrael	SATB	Keyboard	Moderate
Ya Ribon	SATB	Keyboard	Mod/dif
Eliyahu Hanavi	SATB	Keyboard	Mod/dif

TEFILAT LIMSIRAT TORAH⁵⁰

This is a service on the receiving and transmission of the Torah for cantor, male chorus, brass ensemble, harp, guitars, and organ. Composed for the service of inauguration of President Alfred Gottschalk, Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

Processional-Pitchu Li	2 voices	Easy
Ata Nigleyta-Ala Elohim	Cantor	Moderate
Mi Ya'ale	3 voices	Moderate
Moshe Kibel-Al Shlosa D'varim	C-3 voices	Easy *
Eylu D'varim	Duet	Mod/dif
Ashreynu-Shma Yisrael	3 voices	Eas/mod
V'ahavta	Unison	Moderate
Lo Yareyu	3 voices	Eas/mod
L'cha Adonai	Unison	Eas/mod
Hodo Al Eretz-Etz Chayim	3 voices	Eas/mod
Ose Shalom	3 voices	Eas/mod

⁵⁰The introduction written by Cantor Sharlin :
 "The motivating concept underlying this work is the force and flow of Jewish history: transmission, continuum, and departure. These elements (hopefully) expressed in the core opening statement of the Processional, in the development of its motifs throughout the work, and in the integration of borrowed material into the primary character and mood of the whole.

This service, while conceived for male voices, can be performed by mixed choir provided the rearrangement is sensitively considered. Likewise, it can be adapted to varying Torah-centered celebrations: confirmations, installations, and dedications.

Acknowledgement is expressed for the use of the following melodies:

Hodu Ladonai Ki Tov (Processional) - S. Hoffman

Al Shlosa Devarim - D. Weinkranz

Lo Yareyu - E. Gabbai

Ose Shalom - Nurit Hirsch

I offer words of deep gratitude to President Gottschalk, a friend of many years, who honored me with the gratifying task of composing the Service for his inauguration; and to Dr. Eugene Mihaly, who wrote and prepared the liturgy for the Service, and whose lofty-vision guided me throughout our collaboration.

SHABBAT SERVICE IN ROUND, CANON, AND MYSTERY

This service is written for Cantor, mixed choir [advanced], and chamber orchestra. It had its debut at the American Conference of Cantors' National convention in Los Angeles, in July of 1983.

Hineni Muchan	C-SATB	Mod/dif
Candle Lighting	Cantor	Moderate
L'cha Dodi	C-SATB	Difficult
Barchu	C-SATB	Mod/dif
Shma	Unison	Easy
V'shinantam	SA	Mod/dif
Mi Chamocha	C-SATB	Difficult
V'shamru (adagio)	C-SATB	Difficult
Sim Shalom (playful)	SATB	Mod/dif
May the Words-Yih'yu L'ratzon	C-SATB	Difficult

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