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Midrash מדרש Yehudit יהודית

New interpretation & adaptation of the Scroll of Judith & the Midrashim

Iris Karlin DFSSM 24'

Senior Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of Requirements for Cantorial Ordination and Master of Sacred Music Degree

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

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Written Project Advisor: Rabbi Wendy Zierler Musical Project Advisor: Cantor Gerald Cohen

Dedicated to all generations

of the daughters of Israel.

May they always have a voice

May they always have a choice

And may they have the ability

to create and control their own narratives,

and tell their own stories.

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Vocal score

The sheet music of the vocal score will restart the page numbering, and will include the score index, separated and indicated by musical scenes.

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Introduction

Growing up in an environment that did not nurture the feminine voice (vocally or ideologically), I always wanted to be exposed to more women's stories and their voices. In my cantorial studies, I came across the story of Yehudit, as depicted in the "Scroll of Judith," but quickly learned that this Jewish heroine's story is not a part of the Jewish tradition. Despite her heroism and major contribution to the Jewish people, Yehudit had been put aside, cast away, excluded from the Jewish canon. However, 'Judith' had always been a part of the Christian canon, respected by the church, but not by her own people. The book's exclusion from the Jewish bookshelf is often explained by contemporary researchers as a result of its possible association with the Hasmonean dynasty (which was opposed by the early Rabbis), or its association with the Pharisees, or the disagreement of the Rabbis to the seductive behavior of Yehudit, or simply the lateness of its composition. The more I read into the story, the more curious I became about the exclusion of the book of Yehudit, as reflecting the condemnation of the character of Yehudit by the Sadducees and the early Rabbis. In my paper, I highlight texts that insinuate the discontentment of the Jewish leadership with Yehudit's behavior, that can be attributed to the banning of the book in Judea. However, while banned in Judea, the scroll was respected and celebrated in the Diaspora. This could explain how for generations, the Sephardic Jews celebrated Eid-El-Banat (the holiday of the daughters) and read the scroll of Yehudit during Chanukkah, while the Ashkenazi Jews, to this day, are unaware of the scroll and the story.

¹ (Luria 1974)

Introduction

Who was Yehudit? There are disputes over the identity of this biblical character: Was she a fictional character in a parable, an allegorical representation of Queen Salome Alexandra, Judea's only female monarch (Seventy-six to sixty-seven BC)?² Or a real person who lived the story described in the book? Whether Yehudit (or – the "Jewess" from Judea) was a queen or not, she won her place in Western art, poetry, music, and drama. In medieval European literature, we find poems, homilies, and biblical paraphrases about Yehudit. Throughout history, artists chose to depict Yehudit's act of beheading Holofernes, as an allegory to their nations' ability to defeat the enemy. For example, in Renaissance Italy Yehudit was portrayed as an example of a Florentine women, and Holofernes was viewed as the tyrants who threatened the independence of Italian citystates. This parable was depicted by some of the greatest artists, such as Botticelli ('Judith with the Head of Holofernes', c.1469, Italy), Michelangelo ("Judith" c.1508, Italy, appears on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel), and Caravaggio ('Judith beheading Holofernes', c.1599, Italy). Yehudit's journey was not exclusive to Italy, and she was depicted by other famous artists in different eras and locations, such as Bigot ('Judith Cutting Off the Head of Holofernes', c. 1640, France), Goya ('Judith and Holofernes', 1819-1823, Spain), and Klimt ('Judith and the Head of Holofernes', c. 1901, Germany) to name a few.

The historical dating of Yehudit varies depending on the version of the story. Contemporary historians have concluded that the work was composed in the second half of the second century BCE, based on a story set presumably in the seventh or sixth century

² (Dombkowski -Hopkins 1992)

BCE allegedly in Assyria / Babylonia.³ Rabbinic Midrashim are associating the Scroll of Yehudit with the Hasmonean era, and Rabbis' exegesis of the story explicitly relate to Jewish traditions, not explored by the other scrolls, such as references to the holiday of Chanukkah, and changes enacted to Jewish laws of descent to those of Matrilineality.

A female centered Chanukkah story? The medieval Rabbinic scroll instructs us to read the scroll on Chanukkah, yet this is currently not a part of our Chanukkah's practice.⁴ Yehudit's scroll's journey in the Jewish world is quite enigmatic. For generations we were not exposed to its explications of laws relating to the Jewish shift to matrilineal descent. There is so much to disclose in this story. When I learned that the preface to the story was the rape of the daughters of Israel, and that the Jewish leadership accepted the situation, and even actively led the maidens and handed them to be raped, in exchange for maintaining their 'priestly' leadership position, I was outraged. It was not the curious scholar in me that needed to dig and unveil this story, it was my inner feminist, living in the age of #metoo, that was determined to break the silence, give voice to the victims, and bring forth the story of this brave protofeminist, who risked everything to stop the rapes.

It became my calling and my own project of "tikkun olam" (repairing the world) to give Yehudit the respect she deserves. But it was more than that. It was what her story could mean to other women, and how it might motivate and strengthen our daughters.

³ Pfeiffer, Robert H. 1949. *History of New Testament Times with an Introduction to the Apocrypha*. New York, NY: Harper & Row publishers.

⁴ The Medieval Rabbinic scroll (which I'll expend on in my paper) is starting with the words "Megilat Yehudit l'omra b'Chaukkah" – The Scroll of Yehudit, to be read on Chanukkah.

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The forgotten Jewish customs associated with the story of Yehudit were an important cultural and religious resource, and they still are to this very day. We should never stay silent when women are abused, and like Yehudit, we should do all in our capability to bring such situations to an end. This project, which explores Yehudit's story and offers a new musical midrash about Yehudit, one that welcomes Yehudit's story back into our Jewish tradition, seeks to address this wrong on a Jewish cultural and educational level. I offer here, a non-apologetic midrash, one that dares to name a painful truth, from a woman's perspective, and to give Yehudit her voice.

In her book: "Standing Again at Sinai" Judith Plascow calls to listening to the silenced stories of the women in the bible, to imagining how they must have felt, and filling in the gaps of their thoughts, and experiences. As a cantor and a musician, I knew that I was best equipped to give Yehudit not just a metaphorical, but also an actual voice. And so, I began coloring the world of her thoughts and emotions — through music. I decided to explore the different stories of Yehudit's Scroll, study their differences, and see what's at stake at each one. The Journey of Yehudit's story might have started from a Jewish source, but it was Helenized and then later Christianized. Despite the medieval era Jewish efforts to re-Judaize the story, and bring it back into the Jewish culture, Yehudit disappeared again from the Jewish tradition, and it is my resolution to bring her back, and give her the stage.

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⁵ Plascow, Judith, 1990. *Standing again at Sinai: Judaism from a Feminist Perspective*. New York: Harper & Row.

With a source scholarly methodology, a midrashic methodology, and a feminist lens looking for the empowerment of women, I created an exeges is to the story, that invited all the different text sources to a conversation. By using the existing sources, I was able to map a life story that I was drawn to. My filter mechanism was weaving together the most compelling components from the different stories, and weeding away non relevant features and influences that felt alien to me and my Judaism. It was important for me to trace Jewish elements, and to pinpoint and explore allusions, that revealed so much information about the characters. With the mission to take the story back to Judaism, the sources that influenced me the most were: *Megilat Yehudit* – The Warsaw edition, written by Yitzchak Zekl Frenkl in 1885, based on the Septuagint, translated directly from Greek, contains the same structure as the original⁶; Sippur Ma'aseh Yehudit - The story of Yehudit in the book of Chemdat Yamim, A Kabbalistic book that details Jewish laws and customs, written in Izmir, Published in 1731 by Rabbi Israel Yaakov Algazi; and the Midrashim of Yehudit from Otzar Midrashim⁷, and an unpublished manuscript that I learned about while searching the HUC library in Cincinnati. A manuscript exposed by Moses Gaster, that is radically different, and perhaps the oldest Hebraic source of Yehudit.8

⁶ The name - septjuədʒɪnt comes from the Latin - Septuaginta. It means 'seventy' (In Roman numerals it is referred to as LXX), which represents the seventy different scholars, hired to document, and translate the biblical stories to Greek, from various sources, places and languages. The Babylonian Talmud, Tractate Megillah, tells us that Ptolemy II Philadelphus ordered six wise men of each tribe (totaling seventy-two, not seventy) to collect all the biblical stories and translate them into koine Greek (Tractate Megillah 9a). The Septuagint had been written, used, and accepted by the Jews of the Second Temple period, but since late antiquity, it had been rejected by Rabbinic Judaism. The Septuagint itself has four-part structure: law, history, poetry, and prophets. The scroll of Judith appears as the thirteenth book of the History section, or as the eighteenth book overall (including the Pentateuch.)

⁷ A treasury or a collection of homiletic exegesis of the bible, bound together in Hebrew in 1915, collecting 200 minor midrashim, edited with introductions and notes by Rabbi Yehuda David Eisenstein.

⁸ In my paper I expend in detail about each source and its content. The unpublish manuscript can be found in Gaster, M. 1894. "An Unknown Hebrew version of the history of Judith." Reprinted from the "Proceedings of the society of Biblical Archeology. March.

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I adapted my exegesis of the story into a libretto, and composed it into a musical drama, adding multi-dimensional elements of tone, rhythm, harmony and manifestations of characteristic motifs based on Jewish modes, keys, and choices of instrumentation. The path to create a new musical midrash took over 3 years. I started exploring the original texts in Latin and Greek, through their multiple interpretive translations to English and Hebrew. Then I translated the various texts of Yehudit's Piyyut, *Ma'aseh Yehudit* in *Chemdat Yamim*, and the *Midrashim* into English. I have compared the stories, and their multitude of allusions, and analyzed their meanings and differences. I searched further for the Jewish input, that was deficient in the Christian bookshelf, and barely known as a result.

I searched for hints within the Hebrew texts that implied that Yehudit was a rebel, who dared to defy the male Jewish leadership, who preferred that her story and her criticism of their ways, will vanish. Determined to do justice to all the characters in the story who suffered from anonymity, I followed the biblical allusions, to get a further understanding of the world and the mission of each character in the story. I filled in the gaps, and used artistic freedom to name the unnamed, and to mold for each one a personality and temperament. Each character got musical Jewish characteristics (, that were indicative of their function. Bringing their story out, I pushed the characters out of the closet as well: I portray the gate keeper, Shai= *Shomer-et Yisrael* (the guardian of Israel) as a non-binary person; the general's aid, Bagoas, as a homosexual; and Yehudit's maid, Bat-El, as a lesbian. I hope that taking this path will do justice not only by giving a voice and a stage to queer characters, but also by giving individuals the strength to be proud and celebrate who they are and their choices, as Yehudit did.

⁹ I present the musical Jewish Chazzanut elements and motifs in detail in part 2 of my paper).

This is not the first time Yehudit has offered inspiration to the music world. Over the generations, the church commissioned musicians to compose music for this story. Amongst leading master works we can find Thomas Tallis' famous 40-voice motet Spem in alium (1570), oratorios by: Scarlatti (La Giuditta 1693), Vivaldi (Juditha triumphans, 1716), W. A. Mozart (La Betulia Liberata, 1771), Honegger (Judith, 1925), opera by Sernov & Matthus (1840), and an early 1920s operetta by Jacob Pavlovich Adler. While only the latter is a Jewish, there has not been a musical composition of the story of Yehudit since Jean Guillou wrote his Judith-Symphonie for Mezzo and Orchestra in 1970, France.

The goal of my senior project is to sound Yehudit's voice, and to respond to the lack of female voices in our tradition. Following the natural progression within the Reform community of adding Imahot (mothers) to the Avot (fathers) and placing Miriam story and her cup next to Eliyahu in Passover, This is a work of a feminist musical midrash, written and composed by a Jewish woman, pursuing her cantorial ordination. A project of taking Jewish old texts and remaking them to fit our contemporary world. In the process of creating this project, I have brought to bear all my cantorial training on this project, infusing the story of Yehudit with an eclectic variety of musical styles, typical of our modern synagogue music. The music caries and weaves together Torah cantillation tropes and Chazzanut recitatives, classical music and operatic range, folk music and contemporary musical theatre. As such, it represents a new musical genre, the first of its kind, which with the advice of leading composers in the Jewish world, I have defined as a "Modern Chazzanut Opera." Yet those who fear the word opera, can safely regard it as a Jewish "Musical drama in two acts."

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To make this opera more accessible to the reform synagogue culture liturgically, I have incorporated additional Jewish texts into the making of the libretto. These include prayers from the liturgy, and texts from Song of Songs and psalms. Some texts were adjusted to a format of "Heb-Eng" call and response, and the old text of the Priestly benediction was adjusted to feminine language for the woman being blessed, and to multigendered language for the Eternal, to avoid categorizing God in masculine terms. I also subjected the textual tradition of Yehudit to a contemporary feminist analysis and rereading the text in light of the recent #metoo movement. This movement calls women that experienced sexual harassment and assault to use this phrase or hashtag to publicize and show the prevalence of the sexual violence. My project on Yehudit is meant to serve as the voice of the daughters of Israel, who have been sexually harassed, assaulted, and silenced for hundreds of years. Our 2024 discourse allows liberal minds to speak freely about abuse, but also about love of all sorts, as well as about sex, and gender preferences. Each character, coming to life, is more than a name: they have a story, a world of emotions, and drama.

My argument is that Yehudit's story is an invaluable resource for the Jewish people and should be passed down from generation to generation. By illuminating her story in a dramatic modern musical production, I hope to elevate the characters, to move and inspire audiences. Using this story to expose audiences to elements of Chazzanut also serves as my contribution as a cantor-composer to the American Reform cantorate. By reclaiming Yehudit's voice, and the sufferings of the daughters of Israel, we can begin to make amends and give voice to their story. Such a project can only strengthen the image of the powerful female leader, encourage women's leadership, and help the Chanukkah candles shine even more brightly with greater symbolic significance.

Synopsis

1. Prologue

Comparing the scrolls brought me the idea of trying to make them converse with each other. The Jewish narrative and the Apocryphal story differ so significantly, that even when translated to the same language, they are still culturally alienated to each other. So I have decided to give respect to the Greek oldest source and present the beginning of the Greek text, in the original language, with the cultural reference to the ancient musical Greek choir. Over this harmonious choir, Achior, the scribe, starts to read the text of the Rabbinic Medieval scroll written in Hebrew. While his chanting will be in English (for the convenience of the audience), it will adhere musically to the Jewish trope system, with cantillation marks that had been adjusted to the Hebrew words of the scroll. Yehudit scroll doesn't have any previous chanting tradition, which brought up the question of the proper cantillation system to be chosen.

Based on a Midrash that suggests Chanukkah is an extension of Sukkot, and the clear Rabbinic instruction on the scroll, that it should be chanted on Chanukkah, I chose the Shlosha R'galim (three festivals) cantillation system for this chanting of the Scroll. An extra attention was given to the first word – Vayehi, ETOY Σ (ETOES) which means - In the beginning. The first word of the Septuagint Judith Scroll, and the proof to many historians, that the original language of the scroll was indeed Hebrew, ETOY Σ is not a Greek word, but rather the translation of the Hebrew word Vayehi. Achior presages the coming of Holofernes and his troupes, and with the sound of the horns, declaring the General's arrival, he flees the scene.

Act 1

2. Holofernes' Aria – Let the River overflow

The Hebrew texts don't have the historical and geographical descriptions of the background of the story, nor do they describe the scenes at the enemy's camp. Therefore, the first two numbers that use the historical references are parallel to the text of the Christian sources. In numbers 2 and 3, I have based my text on Megilat Yehudit – The Warsaw edition, in the Vulgate and the Septuagint it is referenced in chapter 2:14-28.

Holofernes, general of Nebuchadnezzar, is triumphantly announcing his own arrival. He is admired and followed by his army of Assyrians, accompanied by their echoing choir, spreading the Gospel of Nebuchadnezzar, who wishes to be referred to as a god, and rule over all the land. The musical style is of an Aria Bravura, with a Gospel choir. Holofernes declares Nebuchadnezzar's rein, and warns the nations, that those who would not accept it, will be distroyed (and their bodies in the river will cause it to overflow).

3. Scene & Duet – Holofernes & Achior – Up on the Mountain

Bagoas, Holofernes' loyal servant, brings in Achior the Ammonite, who came to warn Holofernes not to fight the Jews. Despite evident interest in Achior, Holofernes refuses to listen, and chooses to taunt Achior instead. His demeanor suggests that he was open to sexual interactions with both genders. But then he decides he is going to leave Achior tied to a tree down the mountain of Betulia, where the Jewish community (who is at the center of this story) lives. Their duet breaks back into Holofernes motive of "We will destroy them", and gets him even more excited about going to war. He leads the troupe away, to set up camp. (The text here is parallel to the Septuagint's 5:9-21, 6:5).

4. Shai's Cabaletta – Inheritance of stillness (At the Israeli troupe)

Change of scene and stepping out of the Scroll's content.

Shai, the gate keeper, a non-binary poetic soul, keeper of tradition, is characterized by the Chazzanut mode of Magen Avot (protector of the ancestry). They are looking at the horizon, guarding, they are the ones to watch the brothers leading the women out of camp, the one to see it all clearly. Criticizing the stillness, and the silence regarding the sexual abuse of the daughters of Israel, who are being brought to the Assyrians for the 'first night right', to be raped. Shai's poem is chanted in the tradition of a Chazzanut Nusach, a weekday Nusach, to portray the mundane nature of the rape culture. Yet the text in the second verse is affecting the Nusach, changing it to Yom Kippur's Nusach, while the Angelic voice — Bat Qol — the Shchina, with no words, chants the familiar niggun of Ashamnu (we have sinned).

At the end of the scene Shai observes the Assyrians leading someone toward Betulia, and tying him to a tree down the hill. As they are going to inquire, noticing the High Priest Uziyahu nearby, they call for him to keep an eye on the gate. His parodic agitated answer "I'm not a gate keeper" is a wink to our clergy world, when Rabbis are often referred to as "Gate keepers".

5. The Mares' Midrash

Vain and self-assured that he is God's chosen son to lead the nation, Uziyahu was roaming around working on his proem (his clergy sermon). He is trying to find a solution for the political problem at hand how to justify that the Matrilineage affiliation of a baby is necessary now, as the babies conceived from the Assyrian rapes might not be "Zera Israel."

He finds the solution in the "Mares Midrash" that explores the legality of the mating of horses and donkeys and their offsprings, reaching the conclusion that paterinuty does not matter in determining the species of an animal, as the species is determined solely by the mother. Shamelessly suggesting that what works for mares will work for human women. With a Rhythmic instruction of "Canter" for the cantor singing it, the musical style is of a farm folk song with a galloping motive. Above it, the priest is chanting the Midrashic words to cantillation tropes.

6. Scene - Shai and Uziahu - Lineage discord

Upon their return, Shai, the literal "Gate keeper" and Uziyahu, the clerical "Gate keeper" are squabbling about the situation and what should be done. Shai's angry rebukes, are taken lightly and sarcastically by the priest, who continues to explain what he intended to say, regardless of Shai's prompts, and uses reference from Mishneh Torah 5:3; and Dinei Yevamot 45b.¹⁰

Shira, an Israelite young woman. Is leading Achior in (no Jesus references in my version... he was not left hanged in the sun for 3 days...) Uziyahu is immidiately prepared to aid the man, only because... he is a man... Soon after the people of Betulia appear carrying bad news to Shai, reporting in panic about the acts of the Assyrians.

¹⁰ (Mishney Torah 5:3) At this time of persecution, when a wicked king arises like Nebuchednezzar and his accomplices, and issues decrees against our people, with the purpose of abolishing our religion , (Dinei Yevamot 45b) the Gemara concludes: And the *halakha* is that with regard to a gentile who engaged in intercourse with a Jewish woman, the lineage of the offspring is unflawed, whether she was married or unmarried.

7. Scene & Choir – Dai Dai Dayenu

The plot theme changes from women's survival in a men's world, to Jewish survival in a gentile world. The Israelites ensemble are describing how Holofernes' troupe is blocking the water mains, dooming them to die of thirst (As for numbers #2 and #3 these are suggested historical facts, that were described in Megilat Yehudit the Warsaw edition, but not in the *Midrashim*. It is parallel to the Vulgate and the Septuagint 7:22-29). As Melech (a young Israelite) shouts that they are all going to die, Shai tries to calm them and to stop the panicking mob with the play on words, and the familiar Jewish idiom - "Dai dai dayenu" (It is enough, it is enough for us). While the willingness to die was not a part of this scene in any of the versions, my association of the scene is to a story that preceded Yehudit's, the story of Masada. In that story, under the same circumstances, the Israelites have decided to put an end to their lives, rather than fall in the hands of the enemy. The reoccurring theme play on words of "Dai Dayenu" fights the people's defeatism, as the Israelites continue to argue whether death is a better option than being captive and defiled. Stopping the argument with a loud pitchy high note (literally), Bat-El is embodying the character of the unnamed daughter of Israel (Channah Maccabee) quoting her words from Otzar Midrashim:¹¹ She opened her mouth cried and said: If you don't have mercy on us, may you have compassion on you holy name Your great name, that is called on us, to avenge our revenge! As the anxiety levels seem to rise again, Uziyahu asks them to remember it is all in Adonai's hands.

[.] מקמתה פיה בבכיה ואמרה רבונו של עולם, אם לא תחוס עלינו, חוס על קדושת שמך הגדול שנקרא עלינו $\,$. ונקום היום נקמתנו 11

8. Scene & Duet Yehudit-Uziyah – Em b'Yisrael

The priest had dismissed all the people to their beds, to go and pray, stating they will cry to Adonai, and wait give days for Adonai to give him a sign, and if God won't give him any sign, he will then surrender and give the town to the Assyrians. Everybody left but one woman. Yehudit. She was with the choir, heard the news, followed the developments, yet she is refusing to accept the priest's passive solution, demanding him to act, and be the leader his people need him to be. The argument is becoming unpleasant, as she demands him to save "our" daughters, and he snaps angrily that they are not "hers" to worry about. He quickly apologizes, realizing he might have touched an open wound, since the widow is childless. She recovers and claims that she is "Em b'Yisrael" just like Deborah was, regardless of being childless. The connotation triggers the priest, who then leads Yehudit through the story of Yael. He implies she slept with him, and then took advantage of the situation and killed him. Whether he is manipulating Yehudit, or not, Yehudit is realizing the solution is not in the priest's hand, but in hers. She is tormented, but accepting her fate, willing to make the sacrifice. The text is celebrating all the allusions brought in the scrolls, referring to Deborah and Ya'el. Another borrowed element that I misplaced was the declaration "Sh'ma Yisrael". In the midrash it was a war cry of the heroes of Israel, preparing for the fight (at the end of the tale). However, having no intention to give space to the act of the Israelites slaughtering the Assyrians, I chose to put it as the preparation to the fight, in the duet between Uziyahu and Yehudit. The scene ends with the priestly benediction. Uziyahu blesses Yehudit to succeed in her brave act and bring to resolution. The text is adjusted to feminine language toward Yehudit, and to multi gendered language for the Eternal, to avoid categorizing God in masculine terms.

9. Mu'azin - Hashkiveinu

I was looking for a "Call to prayer" (which is not the Sh'ma, that was featured in the previous scene). In the background, a memory borrowed from my youth in Israek, I could imagine the echo-ing call to worship that filled the evening breeze, reverberating from one mosque to another – the Mu'azin (Arabic: مُؤذِّن). The word Muazin is an Arab word sharing the same root and meaning as the Hebrew .x.r. It means "Calling (the public) to lend your ears"- call to listen. It is also the name of the position of the person who proclaims the call to the daily prayer (salāt) five times a day from the minaret.

The echo-repetition of the ppl of Israel calling throughout the camp, is their musical cue "safety mechanism" under the siege, that no one should be out now, and calls them to say their night prayers. In this particular text – the familiar liturgical text of Hashkiveinu – Let us lie down. The blessing and the Chatima sung acapella are in Hebrew, book-ending the text translated to English.

10. Finale Act 1 - Tryptic

Inspired by scriptures' tryptic paintings, portraying three pictures side by side, that are creating a bigger wholesome story, I zoomed in to feature the personal response of each one of our three leaders (and authorities), past, present and future, keepers of Israel in their own spaces and margins. (The priest- institutional authority, Shai- charismatic authority and Yehudit- the executing authority, described post-action as possessing a judging authority). The way each individual conducts oneself, in the dark by themselves, with their integrity and their pure intentions, can create a set of different pictures, of presumptions and values, that are not in a vacuum, but rather subjective to the others.

While the three share vocabulary, each one of them carries a personal prayer to God, but in fact, presents us a lens to their Jewish thought, their Torah – ethics, philosophy, and their relationship with God, and their own response to it. The first of the three -Uziyah's prayer, is taken from a rarely used old Priestly prayer, found in Birnbaum's High Holidays prayer book, pg. 400 (Birnbaum's translation to English). I remember being struck in my studies with how self-centered this prayer is, by language and intention, in a moment of truth, the priest is asking to save himself, and God to favor him. From the selfcenter, to the self-sacrifice - Yehudit's prayer, that follows is Psalm 103, which she read in Hebrew and translates to English, in her own words as she reads along. She lives up to her values, and from her honest plee to God to strengthen her, she is turning to ask God to save the daughters of Israel. Her indignity and moral compos, moves to demand equity for the daughters of Israel. Her musical pick charging God, building off the verse "as a father who has mercy towards his sons – "What about us, the daughters of Israel? What about us – who stay in the dark? Can You hear our prayers? Are You even there?" The orchesrra takes over, portraying her brokenness. She is on the verge of losing her faith in God's mercifulness, in God's attentiveness and just, and even in God's presence and existence. As the tumultuous music modulates and dissipates, we move to the third picture, where the one person that actually hears the voice of the Shechina, the moral being that has the true premise of being a guardian of Israel, Shai, shomer-et Israel, does not really pray, but rather lifts their voice and spirits with the words of Psalm 121, in English – "The keeper of Israel won't sleep, but guard and protect" in conversation with Bat-Qol, the Shchina that supports them in a musical echo. The full picture than assembles, as the first two join in a harmonious Quartet.

11. Yehudit Bat-El Duet – God of the humble

The orchestra reminiscences the melodical theme motif of "What about us, the daughter of Israel?" from the Finale of Act 1, as two daughters of Israel – Yehudit and Bat-El, start their journeying from Betulia to the enemy's camp. We have encountered Bat El by Yehudit's side in the first Act. In the beginning of Act 2, we learn she had joined her on the journey, as her maid-servant. While Bat-El original purpose is to embody the "other" heroine from the Midrash – the daughter of Israel, sister of Yehuda the Maccabee, that was brought about to be raped, and rebelled against the immorality, in this duet, with the change of the power dinamics, she channels Ruth, following Naomi. Bat-El quotes from the Scroll of Ruth, that she will go with Yehudit wherever she'll go. Thus, suggesting that she is the potential daughter-in-law Yehudit never had. As they walk in the Valley, Bat-El learns of Yehudit's plan, and tries to change her mind, but in vain. They end up praying to the God of the humble (they also use the term "God of the afflicted" to strengthen them on this journey, escort them and give them peace. The dialog between them is based upon a monolog of Yehudit in the Septuagint scroll chapter 9, verse 9-12. In attempt to voice her chamber-maid as well, I found it appropriate, and powerful that such a prayer, would not stay in the mouth or only one voice, but rather become a "Tfilat Rabim", a group prayer, presented by two women, standing for all women of all generations, and for all the afflicted, who Adonai is their God.

12. Scene – at the Assyrian Camp¹²

A soldiers' choir is heard in the background chanting in Greek hymn –

οι στρατιώτες δεν μισούν απλά υπακούω στις εντολές

soldiers don't hate, just obey orders.

In a nusach based a-metric dialog, Yehudit explain to Bagoas she is a messenger bringing an important message to Holofernes. He has no interest in any way in her nor her maid, his heart is fully devoted to Holofernes' well-being. As she suggests her information will allow less risk to their men, he agrees to take her to Holofernes.

13. Scene Yehudit & Holofernes meeting¹³

Yehudit enters Holofernes' tent, and encounters an authoritative and interrogative strong leader, who manages to swirl her feeling in a whirlwind of emotions. He does not let go of her eyes and gets her hooked. As in the Spt and the Vt, the scene is full of irony and puns. From the pure lie up front, that she will tell no lie to her Lord tonight, through her description of how she'll take him to Jerusalem, and no one will stop him, as he will be a-'head'. She also promises him that by her side, he will go down in history, and will be glorified by the artists for generations, and they'll make status of his head (I found this anachronistic sarcastic joke unavoidable). As she continues to lure him in, until she offers herself to him, Bagoas interrupts calling him for duty, and as Holofernes is leaving, smitten, he tells her that her words delighted him, and he'll enjoy her company, and that if she will do as she promised, her God will be his god (The allusion to Ruth, that I have pointed out earlier). She's leaving the scene after him.

¹² Parallel to Megillat Yehudit chapter 10:12-19

¹³ Parallel to Megillat Yehudit chapter 10:20-23

13. Bat-El and Bagoas duet

Bat-El enters the scene and informs us that 3 days had passed, and that Holofernes kept on courting Yehudit. Bagoas joins the scene. They both have feelings toward their companions, and they are both extremely unhappy with how this relation progresses. Bagoas, who is jealous and worried for his general's well-being, is inquiring Bat-El regarding Yehudit's intentions. The two share a moment of solidarity, feeling unseen, underappreciated, and as if they are "cast as a comprimario, the story on the side, always a bride's maid, never a bride". As they sing, Yehudit and Holofernes are crossing the stage, enjoying each other's company to the much annoyance of Bat-El and Bagoas

14. Quartet – Let me be your safeguard

As described in the scene before, Holofernes and Yehudit are infatuated with one another. Holofernes that feels her tense, asks her to breath, leave the worries away and enjoy in the moment. He serenades her with the beautiful Jewish cantillation motif called "Kadma v'azla", a musical hug, with which he is embracing her melodically, asking her "Let me be your safeguard. Let me lead your story from here. For as long as we've got, no matter how long... "All along the watching Bagoas and Bat-El listen and react with dismay to the couple's love declarations. As Holofernes believes that in the banquet at night he is going to make her his own (whether that means marry her, as declared in some of the scriptures, or sleep with her, as indicated in all scriptures, or both) they agree to "Let's spend our hours without remorse... disregard the cost. And Yehudit is asking (the powers that be) "If only for a moment... Let the world stop - For us." Excited Holofernes is going to prepare for the banquet and asks Bagoas to prepare Yehudit.

16. Scene and arietta - Who am I

Bat-El is left alone in the scene. It's her moment to snap at God and inquire if this was the plan all along or if God is trying her? Or trying Yehudit? She refuses to accept that while the Israelites are suffering, Yehudit is having a great time in the arms of the enemy. Yehudit is looking for her help with the dress she got from Bagoas, and she gets a lot of negative attitude from Bat-El.Bat-El angers elevates till she snaps at Yehudit You don't seem to follow the plan! Who are you to join the enemy and become their queen? Yehudit dismisses her. Bat-El's scorching words reflected the demons in her head. In a tormented moment of reflection, she wonders "Who am I?" having a sliver of an existential crisis. Eventually her answer is" Lying grace misleading beauty". She then shakes off her feelings and her infatuation with Holofernes, prioritizing the needs of her people "My people's fate is in my hands. I know what I must do". Asking for God's help to get her through the night, she pulls herself together and leaves to the banquet.

17. Drinking song – Holofernes and company – Let me climb the palm

Change of scene. Holofernes is welcoming everybody to the party, inviting them to fill up their mugs and rejoice with him. Holofernes is singing a Greek folk drinking song, to the tropes of Song of songs' cantillation. His song is a series of wine related verses from song of songs: 8:2, 7:9 (repeated chorus), 8:6, 7:10, 7:3. He keeps on taking the mug from Bagoas, and being fed by Bat-El. In the midst of the song, he is challenging one of the musicians to a 'drunk' musical duel, to the entertainment of all, When he finishes, his last verse is becoming inebriated, and the words are losing their order, to everybody's amusement. As the song end, Holofernes notices Yehudit, and asks her to sing for him.

18. Acrostic Hora - "Odecha ki anafta bi"

In an anachronistic homage to Chanukkah's ancient piyyut "Odecha ki anafta bi" that retells the story of Yehudit. Yehudit is presenting a Hora dance – Jewish musical folk. After quoting the first line in Hebrew, the acrostic is then presented in English. The Piyyut is soon accelerating into a swiping delightful Hora circle of dancing. Yehudit last words conveying a Romani concept (that matches the music)—celebrate as if there's no tomorrow!

19. Yehudit and Holofernes seduction duet – Follow you

intoxicated Holofernes signals to Bagoas to dismiss the party people, as he is inviting Yehudit to sit by his side. He is in a drunk philosophical mood, pondering about life and values. Her words about 'no tomorrow' still reverberating in his head. He shares with her that soldiers live with the understanding that life is fleeting, and that there may be no tomorrow. He asks her if leaders really worth this sacrifice, or gods? Then in a delightful honesty, he surmises that maybe wine and love worth it. He declares that one night with her will justify any gruesome death. Yehudit is mortified. But he is starting to serenade her again, and she is letting her guard down. As the music captures moments from their love affair, she lets herself give in to temptation, and leads him to his tent.

20. Instrument love scene (No text, no singing. Only orchestra)

21. A light to kill – Yehudit's decapitation aria

Yehudit lights a candle. She is covering herself with a blanket, sitting by sleeping Holofernes side. This scene relies on the Gmara Shabbat 23a:2, and Rabbi Yehoshua ben Levi who claims all the women must light a candle in Chanukkah, as Yehudit did on that night, since they were all in that miracle (the miracle of Yehudit saving them from being sexually abused). Yehudit sees the darkness. She's drawning within her own storm, on the verge of madness. Her heart burning, her soul tortured, she;s asking God to give her the strength, as she is about to give God her weakness (Holofernes). Her aria finishes with text from Micah 7:8, Do not exalt at my enemy's fall, for I have fallen too. The last verse is the ending of the prayer 'Adon Olam'. One last time begging for God's strength, and she lifts up the sword, and as it comes down, the candle dies. We are left in darkness and silence.

22. Open the gates - Scene

Change of scene. In Betulia, Shai is on guard, watching and waiting for Yehudit. The Motif of Shomer Israel from finale Act 1, continues with the rest of the text from psalm 121:5-8. Presenting a resolution, and a salvation by God, who's "your shadow, on your right hand". Yehudit (who's holding the wrapped Holofernes head), and Bat-El appear in the horizon, and the people gather around. Yehudit raises her brokem voice in the plee to open the Gates, and Bat-El echoes her, in Hebrew, with eith words of the liturgy of Yom Kippur – Ptach lanu sha'ar b'et ne'ilat sha'ar (open a gate for us, as the gates are about to close). The irony of how Yehudit, both the story and character, were rejected by the priests / Rabbis / elders, is manifested in their refusal to open the gate to her. The scene becomes a musical fight between the women who are holding the menorah, to "Light her way" and the men refusing to let her in. At the pick of the fight, Yehudit is raising Holofernes' head up, for all of the to see. Achior faints. As people are attending him, Shai takes advantage of the situation to open the gate and let them in. Yehudit walks slowly toward Uziyahu, she hands the head.

23. Uziyahu – Chatzi Kaddish

Uziyahu blesses Yehudit for truly being an Em B'Yisrael (Musical quote from their Act 1 duet). Still holding the head, he turns to the crowd, to lead them in a chatzi Kaddish prayer - to praise Adonai for the miracle that occurred. Uziyahu sings in a Jewish nusach, the liturgy in Aramaic, and the people answer him with the translation in English. While the Israelites are celebrating their Triumph, Yehudit bursts into melodical cry, tormented, asking God "What about me? Condemned as a murderess! What of my soul who took out a life?" The two melodies conflicting, counter-pointing are then weaved together.

24. May your story be a Torah – Scene Achior-Yehudit

While everybody is praising Uziyahu, Achior comes to sit by mourning Yehudit's side. Achior, as a contra-part of Yehudit, feels her pain, yet as the scribe, as a storyteller, he understands and explains to her that it's easier for the people to depict the antagonists as brutal anti-heros, and that's why they are all cheering at Holofernes' death. He wishes her that her story will be a Torah, and that she will be revered and never forgotten. Uziyahu notices their conversation and dislikes this potentially intimate moment. He comes to pull Achior away from Yehudit, and Achior tells him he is ready to renounce himself to the house of Israel.

25. Hatafa – Achior's conversion

The Mohel arrives. In a classical chazzanut number, he chants the blessing of the Hatafa the religious ritual of letting 3 drops of blood. After the incision, as they all say – "Mazal Tov", Achior leads them with the "Shehecheyanu" blessing (That sustained us).

26. Serah Recit – The holiday of the daughters

Time freezes, as an angelic ageless woman is approaching, walking toward Yehudit. Serah Bat Asher, came to earth to reassure Yehudit that she has acted well, saved all the daughters of Israel, and gave them freedom. She declared that day as the Holiday of the daughters for all the generations to come, and she's encouraging Yehudit to gain strength and lead these women with her hearts, in song and praise.

27. HalleluYah - Finale Act 2

Yehudit is starting to lead the women in the singing of HalleluYah. The daughters of Israel follow her in singing the next verse to the famous text of "Mi Chamocha" – who is like You. With a stage convention of sustain of disbelief, fast forwarding a few years, Serah is leading into the scene a young girl, Holy, the daughter of Yehudit and Holofernes. She is bringing the Menorah to celebrate "The holiday of the daughters", while lighting the Menorah, Holy is chanting the blessing of "She'asah nisim l'avoteinu l'imoteinu (that made miracles to our fathers mothers). The chorus continues with the HalleluYah, as Achior is approaching Yehudit, handing her HER OWN scroll. It's her time to tell her own story. With the same three festivals cantillation heard in the prolog, Yehudit chants from the scroll - the text of the beginning of her story. But this time, at the very beginning, she reads that there was a woman, and her name was – Yehudit. One more chorus, and the blow of the Shofar declares, that they won the fight against their enemy. For the last verse, all the wise elders are joining to bless their descendants with peace and not with war. Asking Adonai to grant them bliss and resilience, wishing "May our music never die, and our spirits always soar! Hallelu-HalleluYah!

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Libretto

1. - Achior and Chorus Prologue

- A Greek choir starts chanting acapella the Greek text from the Septuagint.
- Achior is writing on a scroll, chanting in a three fstivals cantillation the text of the "Provençal rabbinic." in Hebrew dating 1402 (translated to English by the composer)

Choir (In Greek): $ETOY\Sigma$ (ETOES) Translation of Vayehi = In the beginning

δωδεκάτου τῆς βασιλείας Ναβουχοδονόσορ, (thothekatoe tῆs vasileias Navoechothonosor)

In the - twelfth of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar

δς έβασίλευσεν Άσσυρίων έν Νινευῆ (δs évasileesen Asserion én Nineeñ)

who reigned over the Assyrians in Nineveh

τῆ πόλει τῆ μεγάλη, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἀρφαξάδ.

(tỹ polei tỹ meyaly, ên taĩs hmerais Arfaxath)

the great city, in the days of Arphaxad

Achior: Vayehi...In-the beginning, in the kingdom of Jerusalem, Nebuchadnezzar,

king of the Assyrians, wished to conquer Jerusalem and its people.

Choir: καὶ πάντας (Kai Pantas) and everyone

Achior: Then he besieged it, for many, so many days.

The second tragedy veiled in tears.

it was declared that before their wedding, the maidens will be defiled.

Choir: καὶ ἀπέστειλε Ναβουχοδονόσορ (kaì àpesteile Navoechothonosor)

Thus declared Nebuchadnezzar

Achior: Then came Holofernes to Jerusalem, and he brought all his army with him.

Choir: καὶ πάντας (Kai Pantas) and everyone

Achior: And when the people of Israel saw how large his camp was,

they feared greatly.

Choir: Vayehi = In the beginningETOY Σ (*ETOES*)

2. - Let the River Overflow - Holofernes' Aria

Excited murmurs from the crowd (He's here, it's Holofernes! Have you seen him?!) as the Brass welcomes Holofernes entrance followed by admirers and soldiers.

Holofernes Chosen men, great army of Assur, hear our call – to war!

From the far lands to the sea, let the words of our leader soar!

"You will prepare for me – the earth and waters.

Unleash my wrath at them and have their daughters.

We'll fill their Valleys with the rebels' bodies,

and the river with their blood, 'till it overflows... overflows..."

Let the river overflow! Let the horns of triumph blow!

Chorus Let the river overflow!

Holofernes Oh, no one shall resist him.

Chorus Let the horns of triumph blow!

Holofernes This is their only way to be saved or enslaved.

Chorus All the earth at our command

We have the upper hand!

Holofernes I swear, I will destroy all the gods of the land.

They should worship only my lord!

And in every mouth and every tongue they'll call - my lord - god.

Choir Let the river overflow! Let the horns of triumph blow!

All the earth at our command! We have the upper hand!

The crowd cheers, and through the noise,

from the back Bagoas and Achior seemed to be fighting

Achior I'm going to stop him

Bagoas No you are not

Achior I have to...

Bagoas Stop right there

Achior No....

(bursting on stage, kneeling and holding on to Holofernes' legs, Bagoas follows him).

3. Scene - Duet with Choir - Up on the mountain

Achior Supreme Commander, hear my words -

Bagoas Your excellence, this is Achior, a leader of Assur.

Achior Do not endanger yourself or your troupes with defeat.

Don't worry my good man. Our victory will be complete! Holofernes

Neh·buh·kuhd·neh·zr! Choir

(picks Achior up, speaks loudly) Thus said our god! Bagoas

Achior (To Bagoas) Your god is mortal.

(Pushes him, ready for a feast fight) You are mortal! Bagoas

Achior (trying to hide behind Holofernes who seemed entertained by that) So is he! But not Elohim!

Choir Ha-Elohim!

Holofernes Who is Elohim?

Achior These people on the mountain, whom you swore to conquer,

(Pulling out the scroll) did not follow the Chaldeans ancestors' gods.

They came to Mesopotamia worshipping their ELOHIM

"Adonai" (showing Holofernes the scroll) commanded them to go to

the land of Canaan. He destroyed all their enemies saving his chosen people.

Bagoas (whispering loudly so it gets to Holofernes' ears)

Are you calling our god a fraud?

Holofernes Silence! I don't know nor believe in their god.

Choir Don't believe in their god!

Holofernes Nebuchadnezzar is the only god, he is no fraud!

Choir He is no fraud! Nebuchadnezzar!

Holofernes We will destroy them.

Achior Great Commander, hear my advice -

Chorus We will destroy them!

Bagoas For OUR god said so!

Achior But his words are not divine!

Choir: Our god said so!

Holofernes And he will send his power!

Achior (whispers) Let this not be yet another sending of a plague...

Choir He will send his Power! Nebuchadnezzar!

Bagoas (spoken) May his name be glorified in every town's tower (choking Achior)

Achior I...

Just tie him, Bagoas. (taking Bagoas hand off Achior's neck) Holofernes

(reluctantly) Your excellence. Bagoas

We will take him along. And there (points), we will leave him. Down the Holofernes

mountain of these people whom he defends.

Achior But...

Not a word. If their god wish to save you, his chosen people will take you Holofernes

to their village, up on the mountain.

Holofernes: Achior:

Up on the mountain

they'll bow to my lord. They will bow down

to none but God,

There is no other way. nor concede when trapped in byways.

We'll be swift, my army will come by, They will lift their eyes to the sky,

their God will not the people will comply. If they won't

They will die! Let them die!

Blest are they, Blest are they,

who have the sense to know who have faith in heart.

when time comes to act.

No sense of fear As faith is fear,

I trust they will start. their trust impart.

They have a choice. The choices are not yours to make,

They're mine to take. but they are yours to take.

May everyone see that May everyone see what is right!

there is no need to fight.

May they find the light! May they find the light!

Come good people. Destiny awaits. (cast leaves the stage.)

Scene change – at the Israeli city of Betulia.

Shai (them/they) — Shomer-et Israel, is preparing for their shift, guarding the gate.

Looking to the horizon. They had been there watching, while the betrothed daughters of Israel were taken to the Assyrian camp, under Nebuchadnezzar's decree the first night right. Shai is accompanied by a Bat-Qol, the sound of the Shchina, who echos and laments with the famous Yom Kippur melody of Ashamnu (we have sinned).

4. Shai's Arietta – Inheritance of stillness

Shai: Betulia is quiet today. Is this the calm before the storm?

Another day, and the first night right continues...

Another girl will be taken as an offering.

They are all sobbing, and I'm just watching.

Every muscle objects, but I cannot protect them.

Inheritance of stillness, as the flowers are culled.

Laughter muted in a silenced prayer.

Ripping the membrane of hope, blemishing ancestors' trope,

drowning out Yisrael's song. Have we gone all wrong?

Inheritance of stubbornness, yet its colors are dulled,

by blemishing every sacred affair.

When history stains the feared, where do we go from here?

Can their honor survive? How could the nation, our nation, revive?

Something's wrong. Something happened. Are they coming here?

I don't know this person. Are they tying him to a tree?

It that an ally Midianite? We'll have to rescue him and find out.

Cohen Gadol – please watch the gate, I'll return momentarily.

Exit up-stage right

5. The Mares' Midrash

Uziyahu: (entering US-left holding a scroll with illustrations of horses and donkeys)

Surely you know that the Cohen Gadol

has extremely important matters to contemplate!

I'm not a gate keeper!

Just keeping our nation together is daunting enough...

These poor women are being desecrated by the Assyreans,

and their children might be gentiles... oy yo yoi...

How do I save them from such shame... oy yo yoi..

And prevent them from being labeled as such...

Hmm... Let's see if this could help with my problem...

Our sages are not so clear...

When two foals are birthed by two different mares...

If one's father is an ass & the other's is a horse,

then the mating of the two can take its course.

But if one's mother is a she-ass, and the other's is a filly,

then the mating can't happen, not really...

It does not matter if the father was an ass or a horse.

So there's no need to be concerned with paternity.

But the mother, yes the mother, that's what's important here in determining the off-spring's identity.

Perhaps this is the key, in this time of persecution,
when the decree of our enemy, leads to desecration.
With our women being defiled, our nation's future is at stake,
if their children are not Israelites, then... for Heaven's sake,
the solution must be following the Midrash of the horses,

and pronounce our lineage to be determined by our daughters.

Shai returns

6. Lineage discord Shai, Uziyahu

Shai: So, did you find a way to stop the first night right?

Uziyahu: I am contemplating how to validate a child as Israelite.

Shai: Can't you just end the desecration?

Uziyahu: The most important thing is our heritage.

The solution is for a child to follow his mother's lineage.

Shai: And you don't care about the women's condition?

Do you just see them as reproductive vessels for your religion?!

Uziyahu: Umm... All our women are important, I oppose their torture,

yet only a legal change, could ensure our future.

Shai: So, as an answer to the people's defilements,

you'll support a new law enactment,

yet you won't act to stop the villain,

nor support the dispirited women?

Uziyahu: Calm down, and don't point your fingers at me!

Within my powers, I cannot act against this decree.

But as many leaders have done,

I can manipulate the way we perceive the consequence.

Town's people are supporting Achior, bringing him in

Shira: Cohen Gadol, Shai, he was tied to a tree.

Punished by Holofernes for advocating the God of Israel.

Uziyahu: My Good man –

Achior: Achior.

Uziyahu: You have done well, And I am glad we rescued you.

Our God would surely reward your virtue.

7. Scene and choir Dai Dai Dayenu

Elisheva, Melech and Bracha enter after seeing Holofernes' troupes blocking their water.

Elisheva: Shai – Did you see what happened? This is absolutely devastating!

Shai: (spoken) No, what happened?

Melech: The children of Ammon have departed their camp,

Elisheva: So did the children of Esau

Shira: And with them thousands of the Assyrians,

Bracha: They pitched in the valley and took the waters.

Melekh: They cover with their tents the face of the whole land

All: We are lost

Shai: No, we're not!

Women Men

Our young children will suffer immensely,

Better to surrender

our young men will faint of thirst, than die out of thirst.

they will fall down in the streets of the city

and by Betulia's gates.

If we give in, we might postpone death,

at the cost of losing our freedom,

and our words would be but wasted breath

if our men are dead!

Amongst the Assyrian soldiers

our women will be dispersed.

Shai: I have heard enough! Pull yourselves together people, no one's giving in!

Choir: No one's giving in!

Shai: Good. I will need the strongest men and women to attend the gates with me.

Bracha: To defend?

Melekh: At least to try...

Elisheva: In vain!

Bracha: We will die!

Shai: Enough!

Melekh: There's no reserve.

Elisheva: We're gonna starve.

Shira: This is the bitter end.

Shai: That's enough!

Melekh: With no more water –

Bracha: There is no life.

Shira: Can't rectify or mend.

Shai: Enough!

Melekh: There is no hope.

All: We can't see the light!

Melekh: We're all going to-

Shai: Dai! Dai Dayenu! We can be resourceful and come through!

Choir: Let us say: Dai, dai dayenu, we can be resourceful and come through!

Shai: We have not been defeated yet!

But is death better than being slaved? *Melekh:*

Shira: We're already being defiled, is it better than to die?

Choir: Dai! Dai, dayenu, We will find the way through,

no need to cry, nor give up, we have to try!

Shai: And we'll get stronger.

Elisheva: Let's try!

Choir: Dai dai dayenu, we should always cherish life,

fight for what's right! Dai dayenu!

For our children and our future, we will rise up -

Melekh: They'll keep trying to kill us.

Shai: and up -

We'll survive and celebrate! *Uziyahu:*

Shai+ Altos: and up -

Choir: Dai dayenu...

Bat-El: Dai! We'll raise our voices

Bat-El: ...and cry ...to the master of the world.

If You won't have mercy on us, may You have compassion,

on the Holiness of Your great name

that is called on us, to avenge. A-venge!

Choir: And we say – Dai dai dayenu we will find the way through.

No need to cry, not give up, we have to try! And we'll get stronger!

Dai dai dayenu, we should always cherish life! Fight for what's right!

Dai dayenu – for our children, and our future, we will rise up -

Shai: It's the wish of the people.

Choir: and up -

Bat-El: It's for the sake of our future.

Choir: and up -

Uziyahu: (Interrupts) Let's all lift our eyes up – from where will our help come?

Choir: humm... our help come (mm)

Uziyahu: ...from Adonai!

Choir: From Adonai! Dai dai dayenu... Shai+ Yehudit: From Adonai? Dai dayenu, we can't wait for a rescue 'cause we will die!

Adonai won't give up, we have to try, no matter what the cost is! Bat El:

All: Dai dayenu... dayenu dai!

9. Scene & Duet – Em b'Yisrael - Yehudit & Uziyahu

Uziyahu: Dai, dai... enough indeed. Too much tumult before bed time.

Go now. May your night's prayers be heard.

We will wait five days for Adonai to give me a sign.

And if none shall come... I will go to speak with the Assyreans,

in the name of God! Now head back to your tents.

Daughter of Merari, Menashe's widow, you too - return to your tent.

Yehudit: Hear me now, Cohen Gadol, For the words you have spoken can't be

right... touching this oath, that you made and announced between God and

you. Who are you to tempt God today? Who are you, to speak in the

divine's name? Since no man can understand, nor comprehend the divine -

Uziyahu: I know more than you could dream and comprehend the divine.

Yehudit: Who are you, to deem us to death?

Uziyahu: You forget, woman, that I'm THE Cohen Gadol!

Yehudit: Not at all! You are not a god, and God isn't man,

yet the spark of the creator is inside of us!

The sovereign gave us free will and a choice between right and wrong!

Uziyahu: "Malchuto bakol mashala", It's your choice between right and wrong!

Together: I trust in God and I don't doubt that God will save us! I/we was/were chosen long ago to carry God's name in my/our heart/s,

And love my/our God with every breath and every conscious act,

For there is no other God but Adonai!

"Shema Yisrael Adonai Eloheinu, Adonai Echad!"

There is one God and none other but God.

Yehudit: I cannot sit by and let them violate our daughters,

Uziyahu: (to God) Is that Your trial, God? Is she my test?

We are the leaders needed right now!

Yehudit: We should be the leaders our people need right now!

It is in our hands, in yours and mine.

Uziyahu: In our hands: yours and mine. What do you have in mind?

Yehudit: I don't know!

Uziyahu: You should leave it to God to give me a sign.

Yehudit: But you are not doing anything!

Uziyahu: That is not true!

Yehudit: What about our children?

Uziyahu: They are not yours to worry about! My apologies, This came out wrong.

Yehudit: It's true I don't have children of my own, but I am "Em b'Yisrael",

a mother to all the children of Yisrael, for whom I care.

Uziyahu: That phrase was used by Deborah the prophetess,

as she was praising Ya'el, Eshet Chever HaKeini,

who with her wits out-smarted the enemy.

Yehudit: By herself...

Uziyahu: Where all men have failed, this woman – saved all Beit Yisrael.

Yehudit: Ya'el... Saved them all...

Uziyahu: She lured Sisra into her tent, did what she did, and broke his skull,

yet her acts to this day are very controversial.

Yehudit: Adonai was with her.

Uziyahu: As God is with you.

Yehudit: She saved all Israel, bearing the scorn of jealous men.

Uziyahu: Is this my sign God? Your mysterious ways, I accept it my God.

Yehudit: She did what was right. She acted bravely. She won the fight

Uziyahu: I hope this is right. What a sacrifice. All others have lost. "Ken yehi ratzon"

Yehudit: with one woman's plan. And when they celebrated their freedom, & when they

hailed the defeat of Sisra, she was crying, hurting, praying – "Em b'Yisrael".

Uziyahu: May it be our fate as well... All but his mother.

Yehudit: If it wasn't for Deborah men might have stoned her.

Uziyahu: She was married!

Yehudit: And I'm a widow, is it better?

Uziyahu: If it's God's will.

Yehudit: And the prophetess blessed her twice, but it was just for the people to hear,

and for generations who'll learn it as a story.

Uziyahu: They will learn it as a story.

Together: These generations would not be without her.

Uziyahu: This IS God's will!

Yehudit: Em b'Yisrael.

Uziyahu: Blessed are you, brave woman.

You will not be alone for Adonai is with you.

Priestly Benediction

Yevarchech Adonai veyishmerech. (Amen) May God bless you and keep you.

Ya'iru pnei Adonai elayich vichunech. May God's face shine upon you.

- and deal graciously with you.

Yisa'u pnei Adonai elayich May God's face look upon you

Veyasimu lach Shalom. (Amen) and bestow upon you peace.

8. Mu'azin Choir - Hashkiveinu

The town's people are singing their night's prayers, as instructed by the priest.

The famous "Hashkiveinu" prayer, is carried between the houses in a Mu'azin style.

Echoing the sound one after the other, to inform all, it is time for the night's prayers.

Baruch Adonai bayom. Blessed is God by day

Choir Baruch Adonai balayla. Blessed is God by night

Hear my Hashkiveinu Adoani Eloheinu leshalom. Help us lie down Holy one, Our God, in

prayer. peace

Help us lie down Holy one, Our God, in peace, and rise up to life.

Spread over us Your shelter of peace.

Direct us with Your good counsel, and save us for the sake of Your name.

Shield us and remove from us ev'ry enemy.

Shelter us in the shadow of Your wings. Guard our going out and our return,

for life and peace, from now and forever - Spread over us Your canopy of peace.

Baruch Adonai bayom.

Blessed is God by day

Baruch Adonai balayla.

Blessed is God by night

9. Finale Act 1 – Triptique - Uziyahu, Yehudit, Shai & Bat-Qol

Uziahu: Ribono shel olam, Lord of the universe, I am thine, and my dreams are thine.

I've dreamt a dream, and I do not know what it is. May it be thy will.

Lord my God & God of my fathers, to confirm all good dreams

Concerning myself and all the people of Israel for happiness.

May they be fulfilled like the dreams of Joseph, but if they require amending,

Heal them as though didst heal: Hezkiah, king of Judah,

Miriam the prophetess from her leprosy,

sweeten them as the waters of Marah were sweetened by Moses

and the waters of Jericho by Elisha.

Even as thou didst, turn the curse of the wicked Bil'am into blessings.

Maybe though turn all my dreams into happiness. Blessings.

Blessings for myself and for all Israel.

Protect me! Be gracious to me and favor me! Amen.

Yehudit: Psalm one hundred and three. I will pray, my God, even if it's just for me.

"Barchi nafshi", bless my soul, "et Adonai", my God.

"V'chol kravai et shem kodsho", your holiness

"Barchi nafshi et Adonai v'al tishkechi kol gmulav", do not forget

"Hasole'ach l'khol avonekhi" – God will forgive

"Harofeh l'khol takhluayekhi" – God will heal

"Hago'el mishakhat khayekhi" - You lift us up when we are heartsore and downcast

Satisfier of desire, with love and compassion! Renew like an eagle –

youth and purity. Don't let them take their innocence away!

God of righteousness, grant justice for all the oppressed.

Benevolent God up above, constrained to anger, abounding in love.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

You reign inside us all, and render your aid when we fall.

As far to the east or to the west, may you withdraw all transgressions from us.

"K'rachem Av al banim"

Isn't it written that you blessed both male and female and called them humankind?

Wasn't that the scheme? Yet it's written here – with reduction, that to your SONS –

you gave all the compassion! What about us – the daughters of Yisrael? What about

us who pray in the dark? Can You hear our prayer? Are You even there? O God.

Shai: I lift my eyes to the mountains from where will my help come.

From the Eternal our help will come – the creator of heaven and earth.

May you never let my feet fail, as Shomer-et Yisrael.

The keeper of Yisrael won't sleep, but guard and protect.

The guardian of Yisrael won't sleep – shomer-et Yisrael.

Shai (accompanied by Qol) Yehudit Uziyahu

The keeper of Yisrael won't "Elohai hoshe-ah na!" No more slumber, I can't sleep.

sleep, but guard and protect. Save your daughters, Mayest thou turn my dreams into

with your mighty powers, blessings.

The guardian of Yisrael won't my God.

sleep – Shomer-et Yisrael.

"Tzuri v'goali, hen Adonai "Tzuri v'goali, hen Adonai

Shomer-et Yisrael shomer et Yisrael" shomer et Yisrael"

will guard and protect Shomer-et Yisrael will guard and Shomer-et Yisrael will

all of Yisrael. protect Guard and protect

Shomer et Yisrael – all of Yisrael. all of Yisrael.

"Oseh shalom al Yisrael" "Oseh shalom al Yisrael"

"Shalom al Yisrael"

Act 2

10. Duet - God of the humble - Bat El & Yehudit

Orchestral motif—"What about us, the daughters of Israel" On the two women's path to the enemy's camp. Bat-El carries a bottle of wine, a cruse of oil, and a bag with parched corn, figs, fine bread; and cheese-cakes.

Bat El: I'm worried... what will happen now?

Yehudit: Everything that fell out before and everything yet to come of it, is all in

the hands of – God.

But they don't fear this God!

Yehudit: Adonai Eloheinu, is judge and jury. God's power will throw down their

strength, through my hand, we'll bring down their forces.

But how?

Yehudit: Bait... tempt... and God will give me the courage and strength

to strike them by the seduction of my lips.

Bat El: (grabbing Yehudit, stopping her) - Would you?

Yehudit: By the hand of a woman, By deceiving lips

Bat El: No, that's sacrifice and giving in!

Yehudit: Not giving in, just acting right. Exploiting beauty to smite!

And it's all for a worthy goal.

Together: And God's might is not in multitudes. And God's power is not in strong

men.

Adonai is the God of the afflicted,

Yehudit: the defender of the weak,

Bat El: the helper of the oppressed,

Yehudit: the protector of the lonely,

Bat El: the savior of the hopeless.

Together: I pray, I raise my voice to you. I speak my hopes to you. I sing my heart

Yehudit: for you - are the God of our mothers and fathers,

Bat-El: God of the inheritance of Yisrael,

Yehudit: Sovereign of heaven and earth,

Bat-El: Creator of the waters.

Together: Maker of all creatures, hear our prayer:

God of the humble, may Your strength be with us.

May the Holy Shchina empower us from within.

God of the humble, help us repair your world. Save all B'not Yisrael.

Bat-El: Let us not be wronged again! Let our hearts be free.

Yehudit: Don't let them violate the daughters of Yisrael! Let them know love and

grow in your light- to love themselves, to love the world, to love You!

Bat-El: Let us love ourselves & love the world & love You!

God of the humble, God of all power and might, *Together:*

the protector of all Yisrael, grant us peace – "Shalom".

12. Scene - At the Assyrian Camp - Bagoas and Yehudit scene

Choir (In Greek): οι στρατιώτες δεν μισούν απλά υπακούω στις εντολές

(oi stratiótes den misoún aplá ypakoúo stis entolés)

Translation : soldiers don't hate just obey orders

Bat El: Someone's coming!

Yehudit: Don't be alarmed I will capture them.

Bat El: Capture the capturer?!

Yehudit: Sh...

Bagoas: Who are you?

Yehudit: I am a daughter of the Hebrews.

Bagoas: Where are you coming from?

Yehudit: I am running away, for you're about to consume the city,

And I am on my way to Holofernes himself –

the great general in command of your army

Bat El: Great General... Big army!

Bagoas: And your intentions?

Yehudit: I have reliable information.

In regards? Bagoas:

Yehudit: In regards to the path and how not to risk the bodies, nor the lives of his men.

Bagoas: Aha...

Yehudit: That's all I can say now, the rest is for his ears alone.

Bagoas: It would seem like you made the right decision

to associate yourself with the winning party.

Don't be afraid, I'm sure you'll charm your way.

I'll take you to him, just tell him the truth.

Yehudit: Indeed...

Bagoas: He'll treat you well, he is the kindest soul. Are you hesitant?

Yehudit: No!

Bagoas: Come on, let's go.

13: Yehudit and Holofernes meet

Bagoas: Your highness, there's a woman here, she's a daughter of the Hebrews.

Holofernes: Go on -

Bagoas: She has information for you.

Holofernes: Tell me more.

Bagoas: She will only give it to you.

Holofernes: Then let her in.

Yehudit: Your greatness,

Holofernes: Have you been sent to meet me?

Yehudit: Sir?

Holofernes: The wind has stopped its howling,

Yehudit: It did?

Holofernes: the air is swirling, something's changing.

Yehudit: What is it he's feeling?

Holofernes: Are you a devil woman?

Yehudit: Good heavens, NO!

Holofernes: You came here by your own will?

Yehudit: I did.

Holofernes: You took a great risk!

Yehudit: I was sent to you by God.

Holofernes: Is that so? ... Speak.

Yehudit: I'm but your humble servant, and you're the greatest of commanders,

Holofernes: That's true.

Yehudit: but there is so much more.

Holofernes: So much more?

I will declare no lie to my Lord, tonight, and if you will follow the words *Yehudit:*

of your servant, God will grant you tall things you wish.

All things I wish! Holofernes:

Yehudit: My lord will not fail to achieve his ends. My Lord will be - with me.

For I swear by Nebuchadnezzar, king of all the universe, that thanks to

you, not only the human beings all serve him, but also the beasts of the

fields, the cattle and the birds of the heavens. The whole world knows of

your wisdom.

Holofernes: Are you a prophetess?

Yehudit: I am.

Holofernes: You seem to know a lot about me... What brought you to me? Or who?

Yehudit: Your bravery and your dexterity.

We've also heard from Achior ... of your experiences and conquests.

Holofernes: There were so many, who can retell?

Yehudit: You have power over men.

Holofernes: Without a doubt.

Yehudit: You hold sway over women.

Holofernes: Guilty as charged.

Yehudit: Your charm and wit are praised by all,

Holofernes: Even the Hebrews?

Yehudit: - everybody!

Holofernes: They fear me.

Together: (And it is known) in all the earth,

Yehudit: that you are potent and mighty,

Holofernes: That's nice to hear.

Yehudit: you are feared and revered, but I have to confess –

Holofernes: Yes?

Yehudit: Achior spoke the truth. The Hebrew's God won't let them lose,

Unless they sin against their God. Now with the food supply exhausted

and the water almost gone, they resolve to consume what God has

forbidden.

And for their sins, they will be given to you – to be destroyed!

And you will know when, for I will stay with you.

Holofernes: You will stay with me?

Yehudit: I'll go out into the valley ev'ry night and pray. I will ask for you,

and when it's time, I will take you through the heart of Judea,

until you reach Jerusalem! No one will stop you, for you will be a-head.

And now my lord, believe my prophecy: You will go down in history!

Yehudit: And me by your side,

And you by my side? Holofernes:

Yehudit: you will be remembered -

Holofernes: I'll be remembered and glorified.

Yehudit: by the artists and by poets for generations.

Generations ahead Holofernes:

Yehudit: They'll make statues of your head.

And me by your side, you will be remembered.

Holofernes: And you by my side, I'll be remembered.

Yehudit: Forever all the earth will be astounded by you

Forever all the earth will be astounded. Holofernes:

Yehudit: With you.... I will go out each night to purify and pray,

Then I will come to you.

Holofernes: Come to me...

Yehudit: I...

Holofernes: What?

Yehudit: If my wish pleases my lord,

Holofernes: Go on...

Yehudit: Let me offer to you... myself.

Bagoas: Your highness, you are needed here...

Holofernes: Come, your words delighted me, I'd enjoy your company.

God did well when sending you to me.

Yehudit: To you...

Holofernes: If you do what you promised,

Yehudit: I will!

Holofernes: your god shall be my god!

They leave.

14: Comprimario's Lament. - Bat-El & Bagoas Duet

Bat-El: (walking down stage Left) Days pass, no change, he is still alive.

Even worse, she's enjoying his company!

She won't listen to reasoning! I don't know what I should do...

She takes me for granted – Bat-El do this, Bat-El do that

She never explains to me, I don't even know where she is at!

Spending all this time with him, while I am losing my mind!

How could she prefer him and leave me behind?

Bagoas: (Not aware of Bat-El, walking down stage right. Sighs...)

He takes me for granted – Bagoas here, Bagoas there...

He never listens, If I have an idea, he doesn't care!

Spending all his time with her, when all his army awaits.

Could he be in love with her? Is it too late?

Bat-El: Too late for what?

Bagoas: Oh! (startled) It's... umm... YOU, that came with... HER!

Bat-El: Ugh. It'd Bat-El! It's the third day I need to remind you what's my name!

Bagoas: Oh my gods... It's been three days!

Bat-El: It feels like forever...

How is he not sick of her? Bagoas:

Bat-El: She is the brightest.

Bagoas: But he's not the type to be with a girl... I mean – that long...

Bat-El: It had ONLY been three days!

Bagoas: Listen... If it's his heart she seeks, she can't have it.

Bat-El: If it's his head?

Bagoas: His eyes? They are on her.

But she should not mess with his mind, it's so precious.

Bat-El: You care for him?

Bagoas: Oh, I have to. It's my purpose.

I bathe him, dress him and I feed him. I'm his henchman, his companion.

I always make sure his needs are met.

He is the most glorious, and viciously handsome!

I don't want to be just "comf'table". I don't want to be a "side kick".

Just "fill in" the time when he needs to rest.

Cast as a comprimario, the story on the side.

Always a bridesmaid. Never a bride!

Bat-El: If they'll put me in the story, would they even get my name right?

Bagoas: I doubt it.

Bat-El: Would they know how old or young I am?

Bagoas: Does it matter?

Bat-El: Would I be silent or subdued? Would I be just a maid, or a friend,

or even more?

I don't want to be just "comf'table". I don't want to be a side kick.

Just "fill-in" the time, when she needs to rest.

Cast as a comprimario, the story on the side,

Always a bride's maid. Never a bride!

(they both repeat the chorus)

Holofernes and Yehudit enter the stage, crossing it to DS left, ignoring Bat-El and Bagoas

Holofernes: ... There is another way, if they would only listen...

I would not raise my spear; I would not hurt them...

Bagoas: How much damage can this woman do? He didn't even see me...

15: Quartet – Let me be your safeguard - Holofernes, Yehudit, Bagoas and Bat-El

Holofernes and Yehudit sit down DSL, Bagoas and Bat-El Up-stage right,

Holofernes: Be comforted, breath it in.

Bat-El: Maybe we should go?

Bagoas: No, we're not. This is important!

Holofernes: No battle fields,

Bagoas: No battle field?

Holofernes: No needless blood.

Bat-El: No needless blood?

Holofernes: Let it all go for a moment

Yehudit: I don't know how to let go...

Holofernes: Make it about you and me

Bat & Bag: That should not be.

Can I treat you as good as you are? Yehudit:

Bat & Bag: That can't be good.

Yehudit: And not as the others fear you?

Holofernes: Do you still think I'm a brute?

Yehudit: Oh no,

Bat & Bag: No?

I don't. You have grown on me Yehudit:

In only 3 days... Bat & Bag:

Holofernes	Yehudit	Bagoas	Bat-El
I can	I can	I've never seen	I've never seen her
get lost	get lost	him	Looking this way
in your eyes	in your eyes	Looking this way	At anyone
Could you	Could you	At anyone	Could it be the
be the world	be the world	Could it be the	love
for me?	for me?	love	She doesn't feel
Let me be your	Safeguard	He doesn't feel	for me?
safeguard	Lead my story	for me?	
Let me lead		her safeguard	lead this story
Your story from here		lead her story	
For as long	As we've got		
as we've got			

Holofernes	Yehudit	Bagoas	Bat-El
No matter how long	No matter how long		
You will be my reward	your reward		
& you will no longer			
know fear.	no more fear.		
Put your faith in me	in you		
Fill your heart with our	Fill my heart with		
song	our song	History of	
The history		course!	
Will take its course	We'll pass our days		
Leaders rise & fall	without remorse	May I never see	There's no
Pass our days	No more need to	you fall	foretelling
No more need to stall	stall. If only for a		
only for a moment	moment	No more need to	No more need to
Let the world stop	Let the world stop	stall. One	stall. One moment
For us.	For us.	moment too much	too much
	You'll be my		We are doomed
You safeguard	safeguard		

Bagoas: Don't toy with me girl! I want the truth!

Bat-El: There's nothing to say

Bagoas: He might not do you harm, but I will kill for him

Holofernes: For you

Yehudit: For me...

Bat-El: You'd better calm yourself down

Bagoas: What do you know?

Bat-El: I don't know what you mean

Bagoas: What is your game?

Bat-El: There is no game

Holofernes: Would you trust me?

Yehudit: I would

I'm not sure I understand, would this be affecting his loyaly? Bagoas:

I'm not sure I understand where is her loyalty... Bat-El:

Holofernes	Yehudit	Bagoas	Bat-El
Let me get lost	Let me get lost	How I wish this	I will never let it
in your arms	in your arms	could have	happen to me
		happened to me	In any arms
You will	You will	In his arms	
be the world	be the world		How could she
for me!	for me!	How did I not see	prefer him?
		it? He wasn't meant	What is it I don't
		for me.	see?
Let me be your	Let me be your	I don't want him as	I don't want him as
safeguard	safeguard	her safeguard	her safeguard
Let me lead	Let me lead		
Your story from	Your story,	Lead her story from	
here	lead my story	here. Not my story	Not my story

Holofernes	Yehudit	Bagoas	Bat-El
	For as long	For as long	For as long
For as long	as we've got	as they live	as they live
as we've got	No matter how	No matter how	No matter how
No matter how long	long	short	short
		lead her story	
You will be	I will be	She will be	
my reward	your reward	his reward	His reward
& you will no	& I will no longer	She is changing	He is changing her
longer know fear	know fear	him	What about fear of
Put your faith in me	My faith depends		God?
Fill your heart	on you. Fill my	I always had full	So is the faith of our
With our song	heart	faith in him	people
Let's spend our	with our song1	He's always in my	Their song
hours	Let's spend our	heart. Their song	
Without remorse	hours		The cost might be
Disregard the cost	Without remorse	The cost might be	too heavy
Only for a	Disregard the cost	too heavy	Only for a moment
moment	If only for a	Only for a moment	Let it stop!
With you	moment	Let it stop!	
Let the world stop!	With you		
For us.	Let the world stop!		
	For us.		

Holofernes Tonight then

Yehudit: Tonight.

Holofernes: I can't wait.

(Noticing Bagoas) Bagoas! Let's get ready for the party!

Bring my beauty some appropriate attire.

(Courtesy to Yehudit) I will see you there.

16: Scene & Arietta - Who am I - Bat-El and Yehudit

Bat-El: (Alone on the stage. Looking around) I guess I'll just... wait here?

(Looking again, making sure no one sees her, stepping DS,

looking up to God with a blaming finger) Is **that** Your plan?

Was that the plan all along? Are You trying her? Are You trying me?

Bat-El: Our people are suffering, meanwhile she's having the time of her life,

in the arms of the E-NE-MY!

Do You remember he is the bad guy? Did You tell her that?

Would surely be nice if You were talking to me...

if I could hear Your call...

Yehudit: (From the wing) Bat-El!

Bat-El: (looking up) Very funny...

Is this the dress he gave you? Well, that's quite an easy access...

Yehudit: Bat-E1...

Bat-El: I'm not saying anything... I'm sure he'd love to see you in that,

I'm sure he'd love to see you without...

Yehudit: Please stop.

Bat-El: I just don't like this. Don't like it at all.

Yehudit: I know...

Bat-El: I saw how you're looking at him.

How in the world did you allow yourself to fall for this ruthless savage?

Yehudit: That's enough, Bat-El

Bat-El: No, it is not, are we still following the plan? You don't seem to!

And who are you to join the enemy and become their queen?

Yehudit: That's ENOUGH! Please leave me alone. And stick to the plan.

Take the wine and the cheesecakes. I will join momentarily.

Who am I? Who am I? That I should refuse my Lord?

Who am I? To trust - as your word?

Please don't let me succome to my transgressions!

Who am I? Lying grace, misleading beauty. I will rise!

My people's fate is in my hands. I know what I must do.

Give me strength eternal one. Help me through till this is out done.

I shall try! Who am I!

(The orchestra answers musically the motif of "Em b'Yisrael")Exit USL

17. Aria – Let me climb the palm - Holofernes and company

Holofernes: Welcome my friends! Fill up your mugs!

Brave soldiers, feisty women, and... others...

Your Lord is pleased with you, and you know what? So I am!

Tonight we celebrate! We celebrate Nebuchadnazzer!

We celebrate victory! We celebrate – WINE! To wine!

All: To wine!

Holofernes: Yia Mas! (cheers, in Greek)

All: Yia Mas!

(Song of Songs 8:2)

Holofernes: I would lead you, I would bring you to my mother's house

Where you'll impart to me your secrets

I shall pour into you my sweet wine

From my nect'rous pomegranates.

(Song of Songs 7:9)

(echoed by choir) Let me climb the palm

Hold its fronds divine

Your fragrance be as apple's balm

Your breasts like grapes on a vine.

Choir: Let me climb the palm divine and pour another round of wine!

Ya ya ya ya ya ya ya...

Holofernes: Yia Mas!

All: Yia Mas!

Holofernes walks to the "bartender" USR, who was playing on the copper mugs as xylophone (each is filled with liquid to form a different pitch). Pulls a dagger, running it near her neck, and then turning it and handing to her, as a gesture for a challenge. A "lets see if you can remember all the notes and repeat after me" challenge. Holofernes will now show off coloraturas, and the bartender, using the dagger to play on the mugs as a baton, will echo after him. However, soon enough Holofernes will start taking out

the mugs, one each phrase, and hand it to a soldier to drink, so the bartender would be left without "musical nugs" and will be bound to lose. However, the clever Bartender, at the lack of a low note mug, drummed on a soldier's metal balls protective plate, to Holofernes' entertainment and approval.

(Song of Songs 8:6)

Holofernes: Let me be a seal upon your heart. Heart (Takes the highest pitch mug)

A seal (Takes new highest mug) A seal (Bartender hits balls' plate)

Choir: No one takes on Holofernes.

Holofernes: A seal upon your arm (takes a gold bracelet from Bagoas,

puts it as a trophy on the Bartender's arm)

Choir: Open the seal, Go on, Open the seal, Go on, Open the seal

Holofernes: For love is fiercer than death!

Choir: For love! (drink)

Holofernes: For passion is unrelenting as She'ol

Choir: For passion! (drink). Yia Mas!

Holofernes: It's sparks are fiery flames. The fiercest blaze. The fiercest of all.

Choir: Let me climb the palm divine and pour another round of wine!

Holofernes: Yia Mas!

All: Yia Mas! (Everybody drinks)

(Song of Songs 7:3)

Holofernes: Your body is like a round goblet,

ready to be filled with my fine wine.

Between your thighs a heap (hiccup) of wheat,

Embraced by lilies.

Let me climb ... divine...?! (echoed by choir)

Hold its blonds di... palm...

Your apples be as blatant bomb

Your breasts like grape-fruits on... (hiccup) Stein!

Choir: Let me climb the palm divine and pour another round of wine!

Ya ya ya ya ya ya ya...

All: Yia Mas!

Dialogue:

Holofernes: That was quite some time (*hiccup*). Where is my Yehudit?

Oh, there you are, I've been singing for you, or was it about you?

I just need to clear my head. Would you sing for me?

Yehudit: I would, my Lord.

18. Hora – Odecha Ki Anafta Bi - Yehudit and company

Od'cha ki anafta bi - I thank you for avenging me. *Yehudit:*

A prayer will form in the hearts of those who languish.

Beauty will blur the desire and the anguish.

Charm will lead your mind astray.

Death has no hold over us today.

Endurance will serve you as your best defense.

Forget all your worries and join our cheerful dance.

Gather myrtles spices and wine.

Help yourself enjoy your time and dine.

Choir: Yai la lai lai la la la lai.... Help yourself enjoy your time!

Yehudit: In every note there's a world full of temptations.

Joys and desires released from your imaginations.

Know what you came with, and with whom you leave.

Lust can make you lose your head this eve.

Memories of days long gone,

Never let you move on.

Choir: Open up your heart to try -

Passion will mislead your eye.

Quest for virtue, tie the knot,

Run away before you're caught!

Yehudit: Sweet nothings in song will sooth your pains.

Temptation will lead to uncharted terrains.

Use your wits as long as you can stand

Victory's apocryphal in my hands.

Wherever you go, the divine is always with you,

Exalted, all knowing, you help us power through

Young or old, right or wrong,

Zealous souls rejoice in song!

Choir: Yai la lai lai la la la lai.... Zealous souls rejoice in song!

Holofernes: Drink and dance good people, there's a lot to be grateful for!

If your cup has just "little" - Fill it up! Top it with some more!

... Bigger cakes! ... Greater cheese! ... All to take ... If you please

All: Celebrate as if there's no tomorrow – Yeah!

Come, my beautiful prophetess. You say "No tomorrow" with such ease... *Holofernes:*

But we, trained soldiers, uphold the concept of no tomorrows,

Celebrating what we have today.

Does war justify that? Do leaders? Do gods? Maybe wine? Maybe lust?

One night with you, justifies any gruesome death!

(Holofernes is smiling, Yehudit is horrified, starting to cry. He picks her head up with

both his hands)

I didn't want to make you sad... *Holofernes:*

Yehudit (collecting herself): I'm fine.

19. Duet – Follow You - Yehudit & Holofernes

Holofernes: There's so much pain behind your voice.

I see it burning in your eyes. I hear it through you.

There's so much love you've been denied.

I feel your fire, your desire. Let me get through – to you.

Follow me – we'll break down your walls before they're cave in.

Let me mend your soul's wounds, and I will follow you.

Yehudit: You will follow me?

Holofernes: And I'll hold you when you fall.

Yehudit: I will follow you, letting my guard down, I won't resist the yearnings of my heart.

Holofernes: For love is fiercer than death.

For passion ... is unrelenting as She'ol's flame!

Yehudit: For passion ... blurs my mind, such fire such desire...

You've ignited the flame!

Together: Come what may – Come what may, to our hearts - we must obey.

Yehudit: Take me into your arms and I will follow you.

Holofernes: Hold your fronds divine.

I will break down the Temple walls, disclose the holy of holies.

Yehudit: The holy of holies?

Holofernes Yehudit:

I will be your safeguardAnd me by your side

Let me lead your story from here You will be remembered

For as long as we've got No matter.

No matter how long it will be -

You will be my reward I will grant you all you need

& you will no longer know fear Your reward..

Put your faith in me My Lord will be with me.

Fill your heart with our song Fill my heart with our song

We'll spend this night We'll spend this night

Without remorse

No more need to stall No more need to stall

... only for a moment If only for a moment

Let the world stop! Let the world stop!

For us For us

She leads to his tent

Yehudit: Forever - my soul will be yearning for you.

The light behind the tent extinguishes. No. 20, instrumental, fills in for the love making.

20. Instrumental Yehudit- Holofernes' love

21. Yehudit's Aria - A Light to Kill

Yehudit is lighting a candle, Sitting on Holofernes' bed. She's pulling sheets over herself,

Holofernes is asleep, his head on her lap. His sword by her side.

Yehudit: A light to spark. A heart to kindle.

A lust inflamed - to kill.

A chance to live, impossibly simple,

A yearning unfulfilled.

I see the darkness, I feel its void.

I'm drowning within my own storm.

Consuming madness, a chord destroyed,

Modulating a perfect form.

Fire burning in my heart. Tortured, bound to do my part.

Wild emotions, piercing at length.

God I give you my weakness, please give me your strength!

(*Micah 7: 8*)

Do not exalt at my enemy's fall, For I have fallen too.

Grief of Sheol, a lifeless toll, impaling all the way through!

(Based on the last verse of the prayer – Adon Olam)

My spirit weakens, what will remain

Should not know fear – God is with me.

Without a dawn, without a dusk

Timeless boundless powers that be.

Fire burning in my heart. Tortured, bound to do my part

Wild emotions, piercing at length (picks up the sword, lifting it up)

God I give you my weakness, please give me your strength!

(Striking the sword down. Lights off. Head off)

22. Scene – Open the gates

Night time at the village of Betulia. Shai on guard. Lighting a 7th torch. Counting them in their head, realizing there is one more day till the fall of Betulia in the hands of the Assyrians. Continuing the Psalm they sang in Act 1. In anticipation of the hopeful return of Yehudit and Bat-El. As the scene progress the entire town will wake up and join the singing. (Psalm 101:5-8)

Shai: God is watching over. God is our shelter, our right hand...

We will not be hurt in day light, nor in the lurking darkness of the night.

This is not the end. God will keep us from the wicked,

and will save the souls afflicted.

Adonai will watch our leaving and our returning. Now, and forevermore.

From the back of the house, Yehudit and Bat-El, carrying the head of Holofernes, are heading toward Betulia.

We can't return to what passed. We can't bring back what was lost... *Yehudit:*

To ev'rything there is a season. To ev'ry one there is a time.

With ev'ry step I'm moving forward

Shai: There is someone there!

Yehudit: Each heavy breath, makes me aware.

Shai: Could it be her?

Yeh & Bat-El: There's no looking back, the battle's done.

Yehudit: There's no bringing back a love that's gone!

Yehudit	Bat-El	Shai	Uziyahu
Open the gates to	"P'tach lanu sha'ar		
hope	B'et ne'ilat sha'ar		
Open the gates to	Ki fana yom		
healing	Hayom yifneh		
Don't shut your mind,	Navo'ah she'arecha''	She made it!	
open your heart,		She made it back!	She made it back!
Before life closes in		Did she succeed?	Did she succeed?
on us!			
Open the gates to	P'tach lanu sha'ar	Open the gates to	We should NOT
hope.	B'et ne'ilat sha'ar	hope.	open the gates,
Open the gates to	Ki fana yom	Open the gates to	She is not pure
healing.	Hayom yifne	healing!	any more

Navo'ah she'arecha	Don't shut your	How can we
	mind, open your	know if she
	heart, before life	betrayed us?
	closes in on us!	Danger is lurking
They don't believe	They don't believe	If she gave in to
her. Do they honestly	her. Do they	himDon't open
fear she has betrayed	honestly fear she	the gates
them?	has betrayed them?	She might have
	Light her way!	betrayed us all
Don't shut your mind,	We'll bring her in!	(with T+B choir)
open your heart,	(with chorus)	Don't open the
Before life closes in	Brighten the way	gates,she has
	with hope,	betrayed us all
Open the gates to hope	Illuminate the path	Don't open the
Open the gates to	for healing.	gate!
healing	Celebrate her all	Don't open the
	daughters of Yisrael	gate!
	We were always	
	with her! We will	
	always be,	Don't open the
	Light the candles	gates, she has
	for peace!	betrayed us all
	They don't believe her. Do they honestly fear she has betrayed them? Don't shut your mind, open your heart, Before life closes in Open the gates to hope Open the gates to	mind, open your heart, before life closes in on us! They don't believe her. Do they honestly fear she has betrayed them? Light her way! Don't shut your mind, open your heart, Before life closes in Before life closes in Brighten the way with hope, Open the gates to hope Open the gates to healing Celebrate her all daughters of Yisrael We were always with her! We will always be, Light the candles

Yehudit, lifts up dramatically the head of Holofernes.

Choir: It's a head! A human head! It's a head! A human head!

Achior: It's Holofernes! (He faints)

Shira: He fainted!

Melech: Give him some air!

It's Holofernes' head! Shai:

Uziyahu: She did it! I was correct to send her there!

Shai: Quick let her in!

Shai is opening the gate, while people are attending Achior. Yehudit is slowly marching toward Uziyahu. With no words, she is giving Holofernes' head to Uziyahu. Her eyes are piercing his. Morning sun rays have broken the darkness. Everybody looks at Uziyahu, as he slowly unveils the head, severely stares at Holofernes' face, then mockingly, let out a *smile and a sneer*, *and raises the head up high for all to see*:

My good people, our God has given us a sign! Uzivahu

Bat-El: (whispering). But it was Yehudit! Uziyahu stares at her angrily for interrupting

23. Chatzi Kaddish Uziyahu & Chorus

(To all) "Tevorach minashim Yehudit" *Uziyahu:*

Women: Blessed from all the women

Uziyahu: I knew you wouldn't betray us! I never doubted you!

May you always be Brucha l'Adonai, my daughter, Em b'Yisrael.

For you did not spare your life for our nation's affliction,

But avenged our ruin, serving as God's striking hand! Praise our God!

All: Praise our God!

Uziyahu: Take this. Put it at the top of the mountain, to be seen by all.

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Uziyahu sings in Aramaic with Kahal responses in English:

Translation (sung by chorus)	עברית
Glorified and sanctified be God's name	יִתְגַּדַל וְיִתְקַדַשׁ שְׁמֵה רַבָּא.
Amen	אָמֵן
throughout the world God has created	בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כִרְעוּתֵה
And established God's reign	וְיַמְלִיךְ מֵלְכוּתָה
in your lifetime	בְּחַנֵיכון וּבְיומֵיכון
the life of all Yisrael,	וּבְחַנֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשֹרָאֵל
soon	בַּעָגָלָא וּכִזְמֵן קָריב,
and let us say, Amen.	ָוְאָמְרוּ אָמֵךְ:
May God's great name be blessed	יָהָא שְׁמֵה רַבָּא מְבָרַךְּ
forever.	לָעָלָם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמִיָּא:
Blessed and praised,	רְבָּרֶךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבָּח
glorified and exalted,	וְיִתְפָאַר וְיִתְרומֵם
extolled and honored,	רָיִתְנַשֵּא וְיִתְהַדֶּר
adored and lauded	וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלֶּל
be God's name – "Brich hu".	שְׁמֵה דְּקַדְשָׁא. בְּרִיךְ הוּא בְּרִיךְ הוּא

Yehudit: And when they celebrated their freedom,

and when they hailed the defeat of Sisra.

Uziyahu: God rewards the good in heart!

Choir: May our prayers be accepted, along with all Beit Yisrael.

Yehudit: She was crying, hurting, praying, Em b'Yisrael.

Choir: Before the eternal in heaven.

"Yehei Shlama raba min shmayah" *Uziyahu:*

Yehudit: What about me? Condemned as a murderess?

What of my soul who took out a life?

Uziyahu: "v'chayim aleinu v'al kol Yisrael"

Yehudit: Could I be redeemed? Could I see the light without him?

Uziyahu: "Oseh Shalom bimromay, hu ya'aseh shalom aleinu

v'al kol Yisrael v'Imru Amen.

Choir: "Oseh shalom... al Yisrael... Amen."

Uziyahu & Choir: Maker of peace up above, grant peace to all Yisrael,

and to all the people in the world and let us say – Amen.

Yehudit: I should be the leader our daughters need right now! Em b'Yisrael!

24. Scene – Achior's Conversion - Uziyahu, Achior, Shai, Bat-El and Yehudit

Achior: (To Yehudit) Could it be true? Was that your deed?

Yehudit: Indeed

Achior: But a woman... so powerful?

Yehudit: God's will, God's power

Achior: Yet... You are hurting, aren't you?

Yehudit: What's done is done.

Achior: Hey, it's okay. I understand. He was a great man. I liked him too.

Yehudit: (sharing a moment of silence)... If they only knew

Achior: But they don't need to know. History needs to depict its antagonists

As brutal antiheros. It's easier for most of us to think in black and white.

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And a woman protagonist? Bless your soul. May you find the powers to continue, when your name alone will astonish all who hears of your act,

In all of Judah's Tabernacles, and in all the nations,

May your story - be a Torah, and may you be revered, and never forgotten.

Uziyahu: (to Achior) Look what the God of Israel had done!

Achior: Godly glory! My good priest!

I am ready to renounce myself to the house of Israel!

Uziyahu: Ken Yehi Ratzon – Mohel!

Dialogue over music

Mohel: Mazal Tov, Mazal Tov... where is the baby?

Shira: Not exactly a baby... (gesturing to Achior)

Mohel: I see... (To Achior) Are you the baby?

Achior: (laughing): I guess I am. Are you the Mohel?

Mohel: I guess I am.

Achior: Well... You know better than I what's going to happen now...

After the... you know... (gesturing chopping)

Would I have such a low voice like yours?

Mohel: (In a low tone) No. (-Village maidens laugh-)

Uziyahu: My good man, let's proceed.

Mohel: By all means.

Mohel: Baruch ata Adonai, our God, the king of the universe,

Who sanctified us to draw the blood of Brith – Hatafa,

Baruch ata Adonai, maker of the covenant. (Taking out his tools)

They turn with their back to the audience, and the Mohel is drawing the blood.

When it is done, he hands Achior a small scroll with blessings to read)

Mohel: Sh'koyach! Now read these two blessings

Achior: Blessed are You, Adonai, our God, the king of the universe, who

sanctified us and commanded us, to enter the covenant of our father

Abraham.

All: Amen!

Achior: Baruch ata Adonai, our God, the king of the universe, Shehecheyanu -

Choir: That made us live

Achior: Vekiyemanu

and sustained our lives Choir:

Achior: vehigianu

Choir: Until we reached this time

Achior: Lazman Hazeh

All: Amen! Mazal Toy!

Everybody gathers around Achior to congratulate him, Scene up stage freezes, Yehudit down stage right, sits in agony motionless and emotionless during the last scene. Down stage left appeared an age-less time-less woman, the midrashic mythical Serah. She lights the stage with her presence, and slowly crosses to Yehudit while singing.

26. Serah' Recit

Serah: Look up, my child, you have acted well.

You have saved all B'not Yisrael!

"L'dor vador"- for generations to come,

They have received the greatest gift – of freedom!

The have a choice to love. They have a voice to raise their spirits!

May no one ever take away, their right to make decisions about their bodies!

Gain strength, my child, the road ahead is full of challenges,

for every "Em b'Yisrael".

Lead them with your heart and teach them to appreciate their voices.

May this day be a holiday – The Holiday of the daughters,

and for years to come they'll celebrate the blessing of womanhood.

May their right to decide for their own bodies,

never fall to the hands of men again.

Rise up, my child, you have acted well.

Take the timbrels and sing with all B'not Yisrael!

L'dor vador- for generations to come,

May the Menorah lights of Chanukkah,

Bring warmth to hearts, and memories and hope...

27. Finale – HalleluYah

Yehudit: Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem!

All women: Hallelu Hallelu-Yah!

Yehudit: With the beat in your heart, and the timbrels in your hands,

Bless this day of peace – Hallelu

Choir: Hallelu

Sing a new song, a new start, bring the drums and the bands *Yehudit:*

All: Hallelu, HalleluYah!

Yehudit: Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem raise your voice in celebration

Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem Hallelu Hallelu-Yah!

I will sing to my God, and all creation will incline Women:

Towards the light, the eternal – Hallelu

Choir: Hallelu

Women: Who is like you Adonai - Working wonders and divine!

All: Hallelu, HalleluYah.

Hallellu all daughters of Jerusalem raise your voice in Adoration

Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem Hallelu Hallelu Yah!

(Serah, who disappeared as the song began, is moving the time again, and reappears. We are a decade into the future now, and Serah is leading in a young girl, Holy, the daughter of Yehudit and Holofernes, bringing a Menorah to light with Yehudit

Holy: "Baruch ata Adonai, Eloheinu melech ha'olam, sh'asah nisim l'avoteinu"

Serah: (correcting her) "l'Imoteinu"

(fixing her mistake) "L'Imoteino..." "Bayamim hahem, bazman hazeh." *Holy:*

Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem raise your voice in celebration

Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem Hallelu Hallelu Yah!

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(After lighting the Menorah lights with Holy. Serah gives Yehudit a scroll, Yehudit opens it and starts reading to Holy the Megillah, with a women center thema. Musically she is quoting the tropes with which Achior started chanting the Megillah in the prologue.)

Yehudit: "Vayehi" in the beginning of our Chanukkah story,

there was a woman, and her name was Yehudit.

Choir: Bless our descendants, Adonai, with peace and not with war

Grant them bliss and resilience, Hallelu. Hallelu.

Yehudit: May our music never die, and our spirits always soar

All: Hallelu, HalleluYah.

Hallelu all daughters of Jerusalem...



A Modern Chazzanut Musical Drama

- Vocal Score -

Written & Composed by

Iris Karlin

Hebrew Union College, NYC

Featuring DFSSM classes of 2024, 2025, and 2026

Advisors: Cantor Gerald Cohen & Cantor Jonathan Comisar



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Yehudit - Prologue

Achior the scribe and background greek choir

ΕΤΟΥΣ

δωδεκάτου τῆς βασιλείας Ναβουχοδονόσορ, ὂς ἐβασίλευσεν Ἀσσυρίων ἐν Νινευῆ τῆ πόλει τῆ μεγάλῃ, ἐν ταῖς ἡμέραις Ἀρφαξάδ.

who reigned over the Assyrians in Nineveh, the great city, in the days of Arphaxad.

Translation of Vayehi = In the beginning,

in the - twelfth of the reign of Nebuchadnezzar,

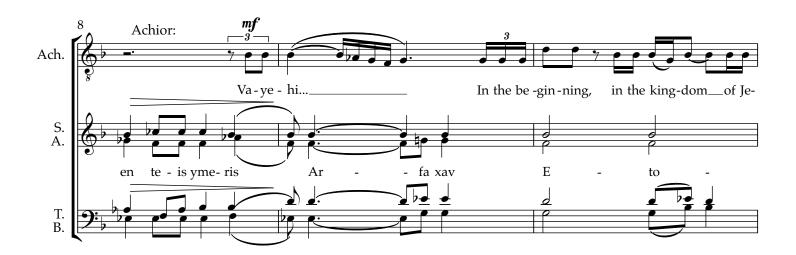
(Reacting to Achior's reading:)

καὶ πάντας καὶ ἀπέστειλε Ναβουχοδονόσορ And everyone. Thus declared Nebuchadnezzar.













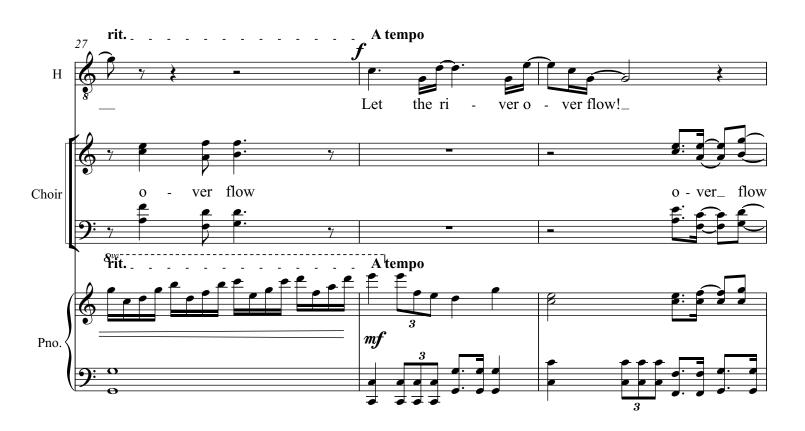
- Let the River Overflow

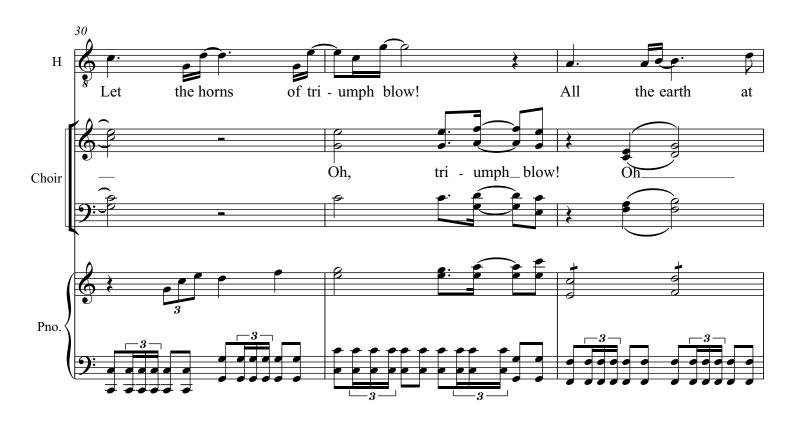
Holofernes aría

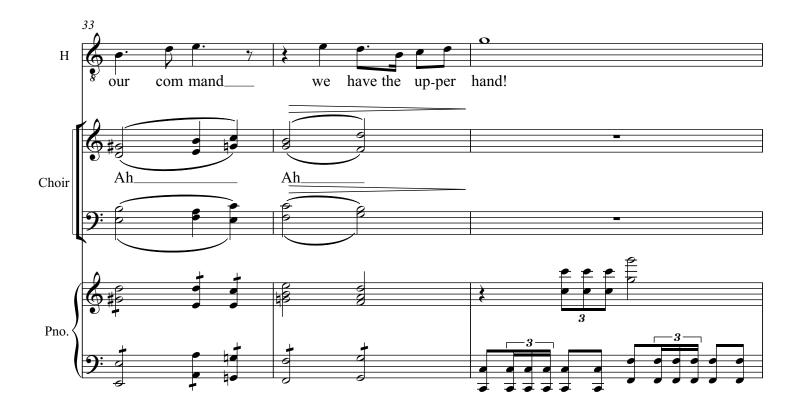




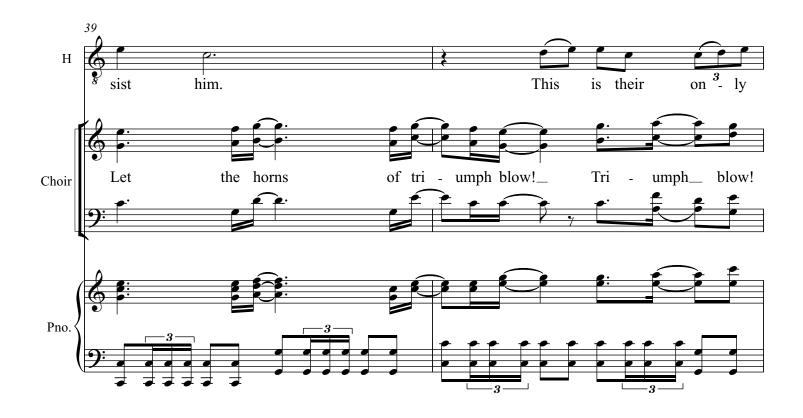
















Updated Jul 2023'

3. Up on the Mountain

Scene & Duet - Achior & Holofernes

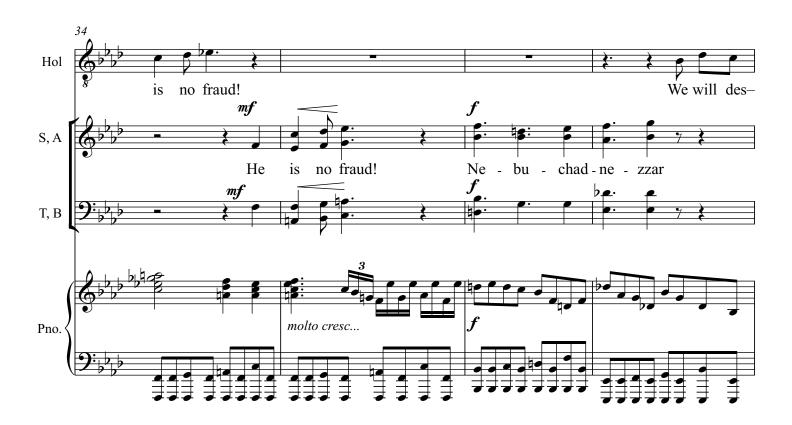
The crowd cheers, and through the noise, from the back Bagoas and Achior seemed to be fighting



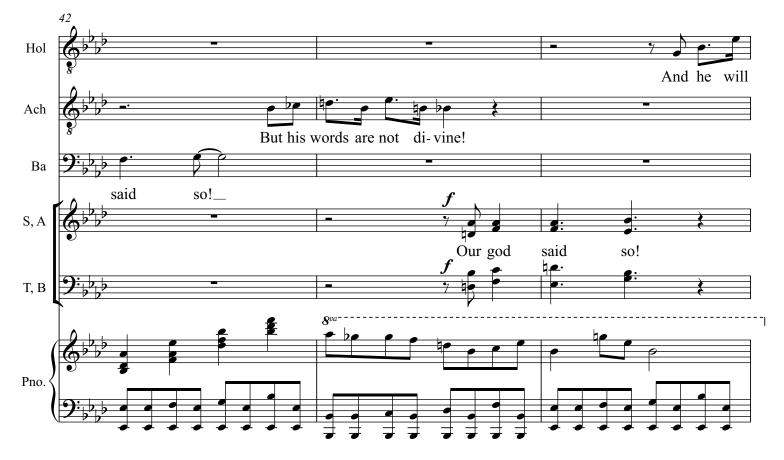














Holofernes: We will take him along, And there *(points)*, we will leave him. Achior: But...

Down the mountain of these people whom he defends. Holofernes: Not a word.











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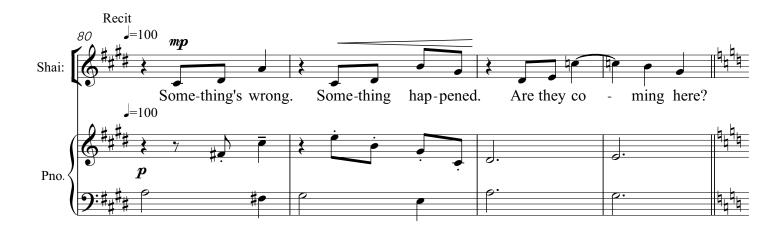
4. Inheritance of Stillness



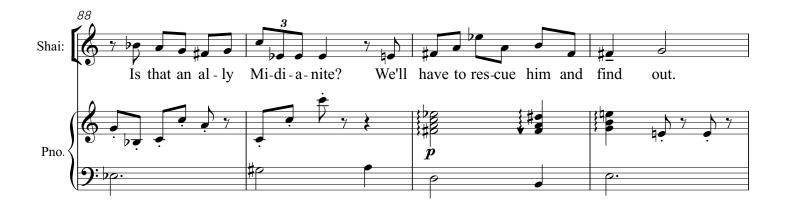












As they are leaving, they call to the Cohen Gadol (Backstage) to fill in for them.



5. The Mares' Midrash Uziyahu's Arietta





Yehudit - 5. The Mares' Midrash







Updated: Jul 23'

6. Lineage Discord Scene - Shai & Uziyahu

Shai returns to their post



Yehudit - 6. Lineage Discord





Yehudit - 6. Lineage Discord



Yehudit - 6. Lineage Discord



Updated Jul 23'

7. Daí Daí Dayenu

Scene - Dectet - Shai and the Israelites

Elisheva, Melech and Bracha enter the stage after seeing Holofernes' troupes blocking their water.













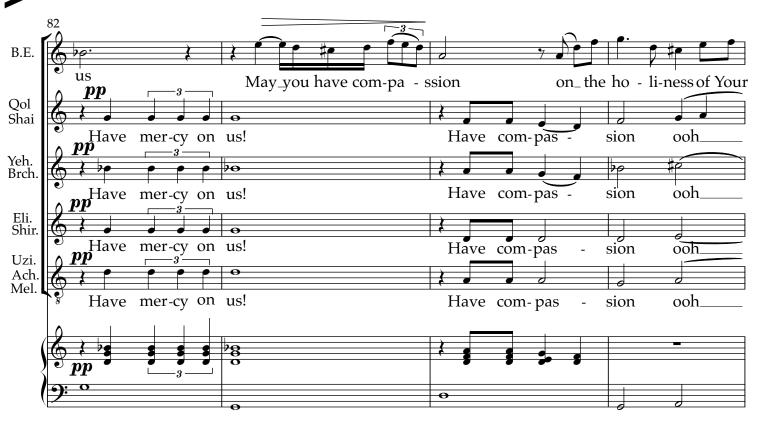




















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8. Em B'Yisrael



















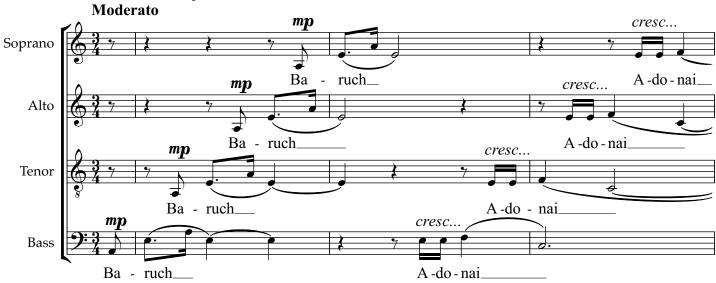


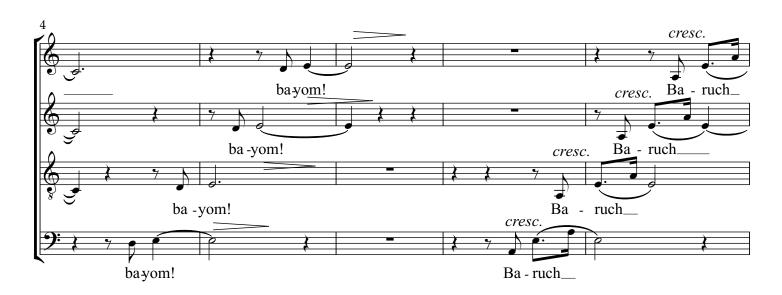


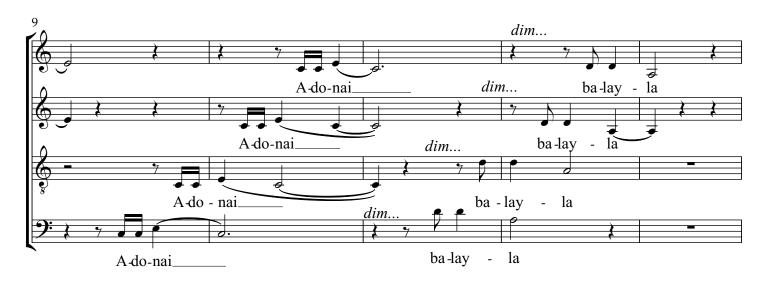


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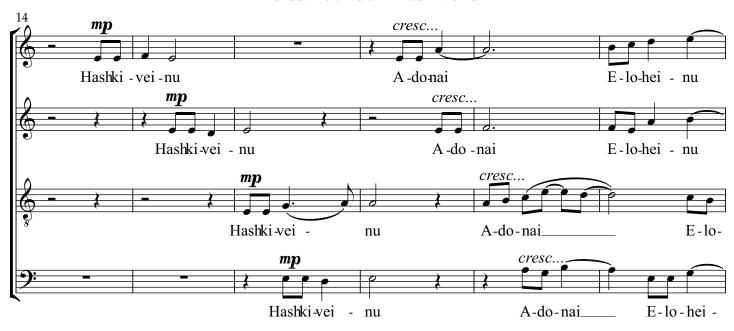
9. Mu'azín Hashkíveínu

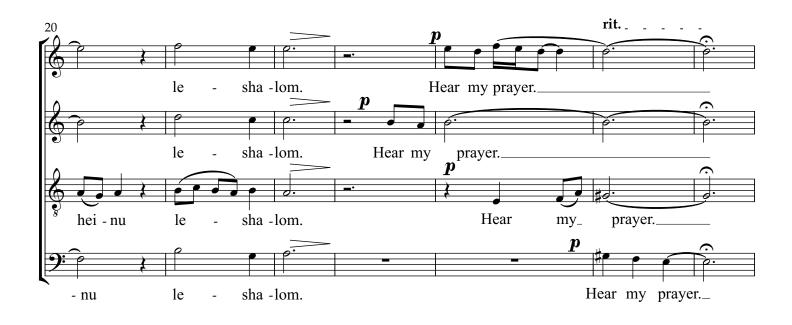


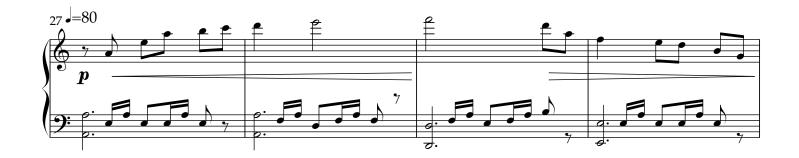




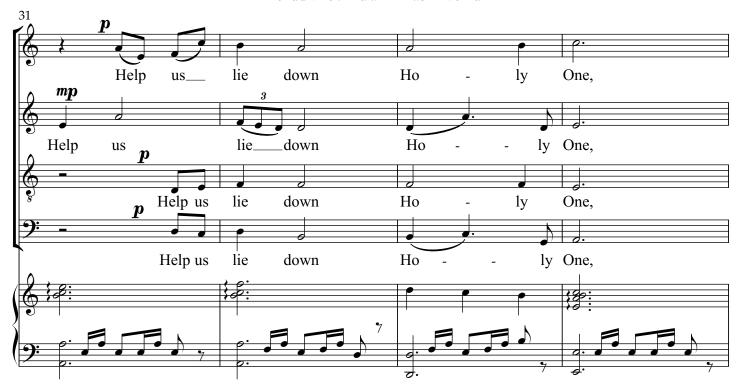
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu

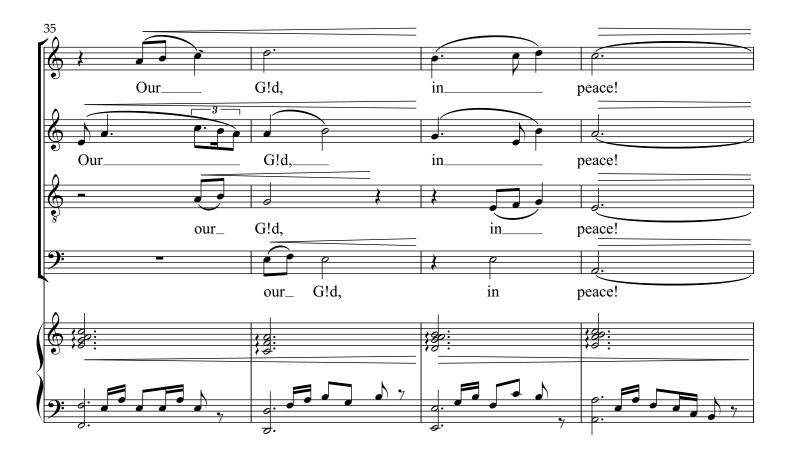




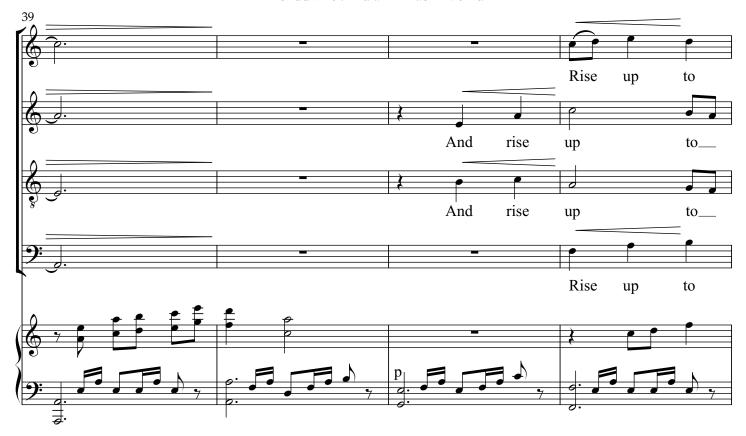


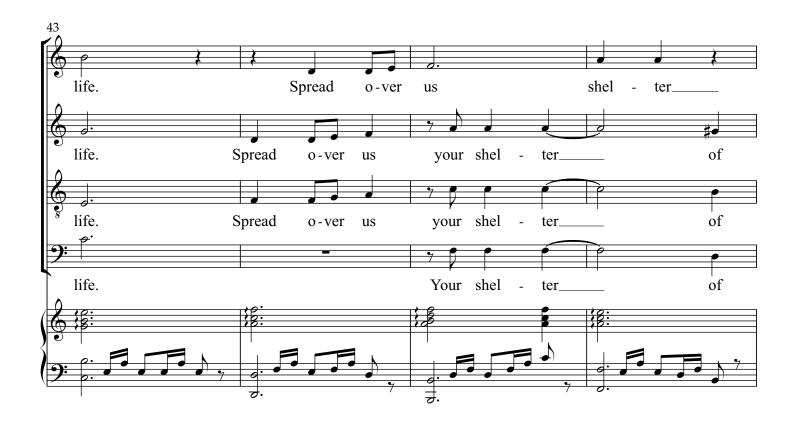
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu





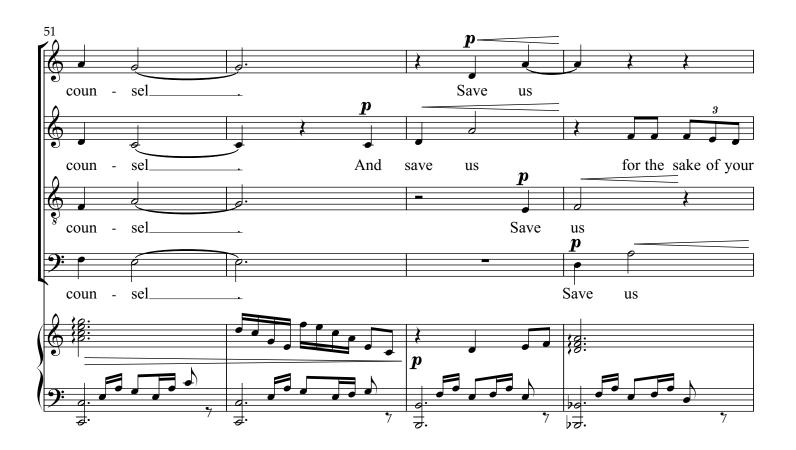
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu



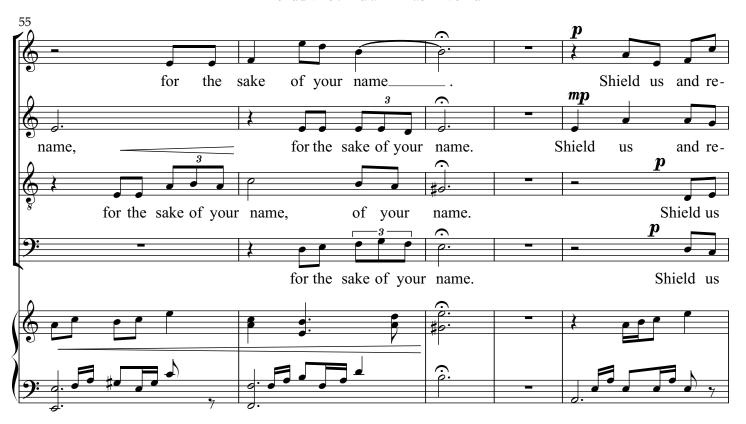


Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu



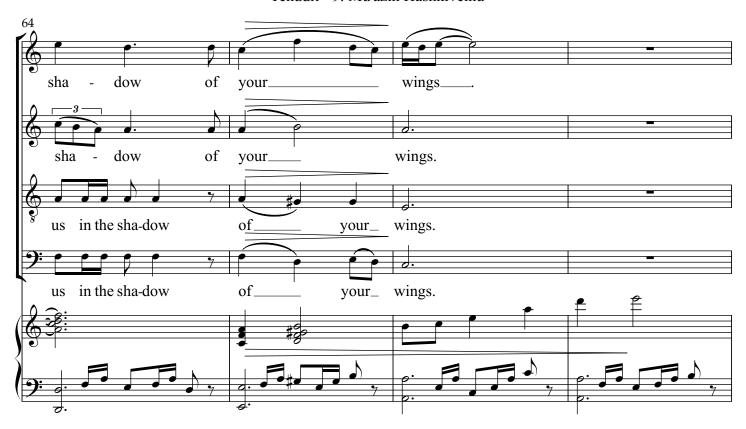


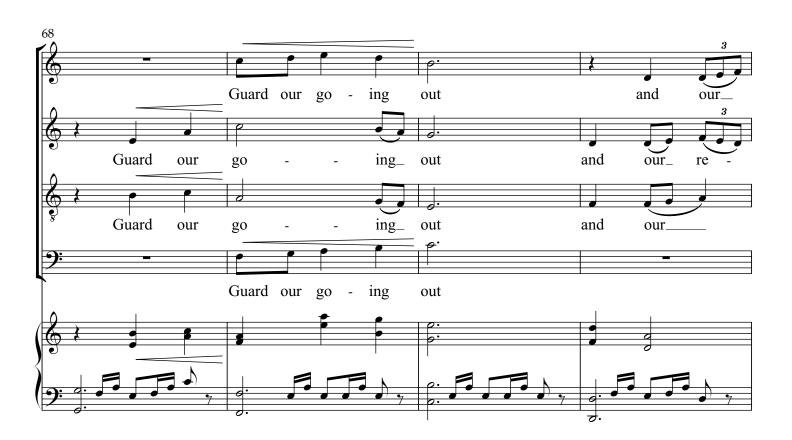
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu



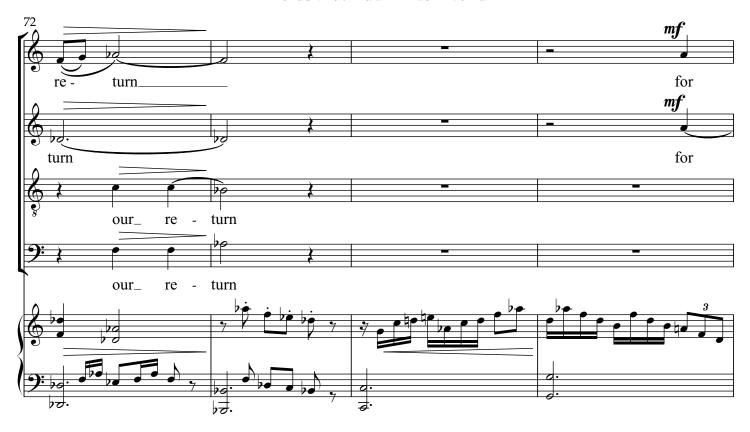


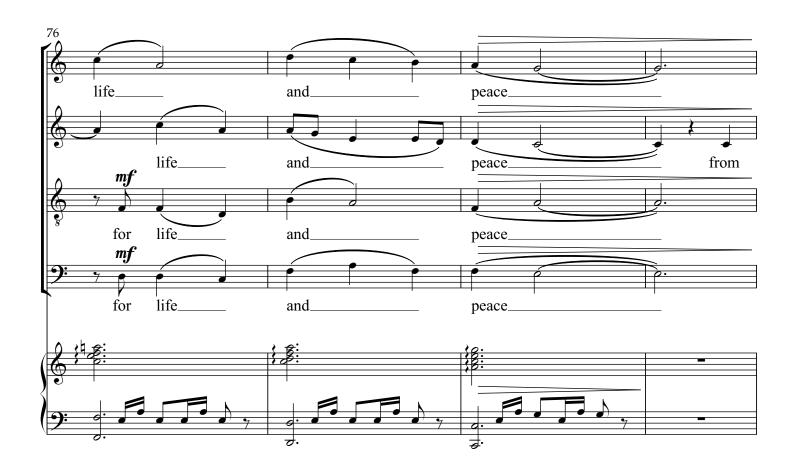
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu



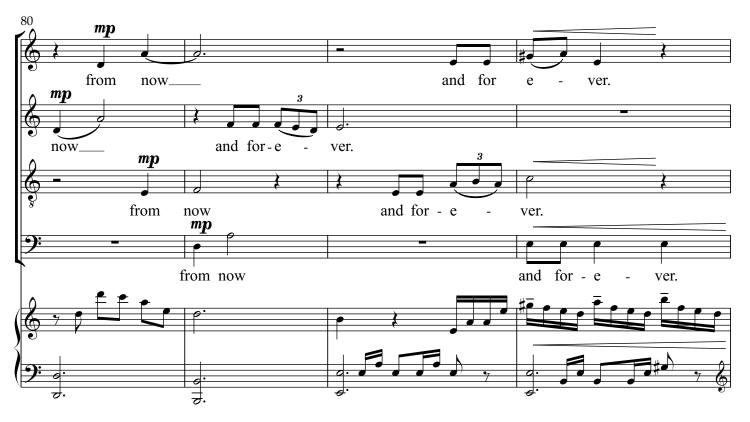


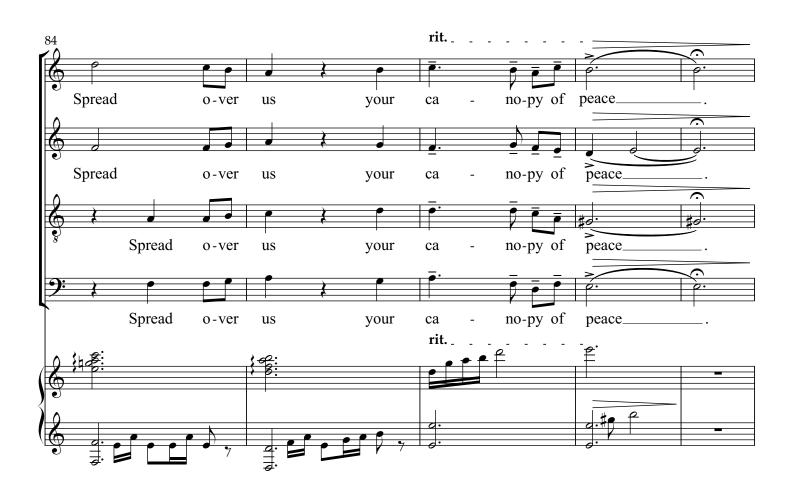
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu

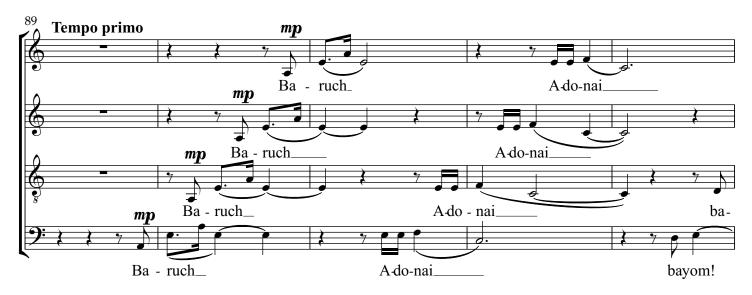


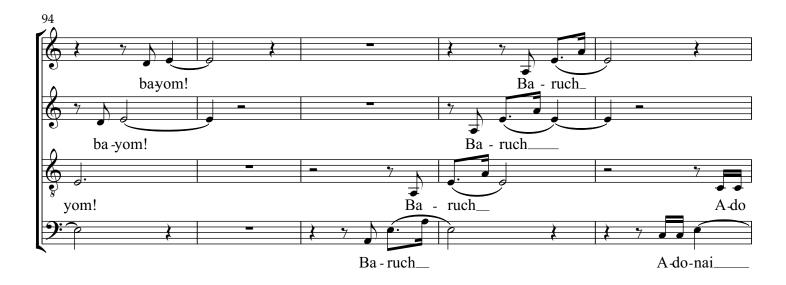


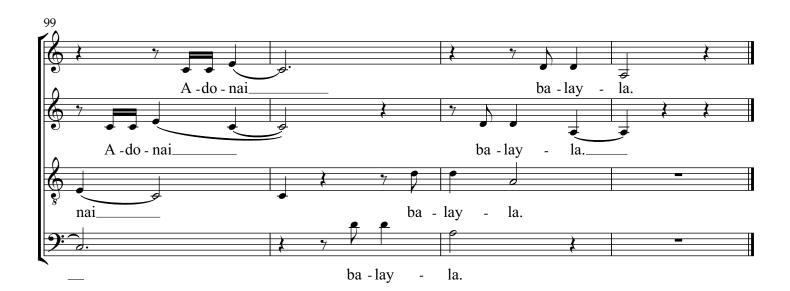
Yehudit - 9. Mu'azin Hashkiveinu











Updated Jul 23'

Finale Act 1

Triptic - Uziyahu, Yehudit, Shai & Bat-Qol



















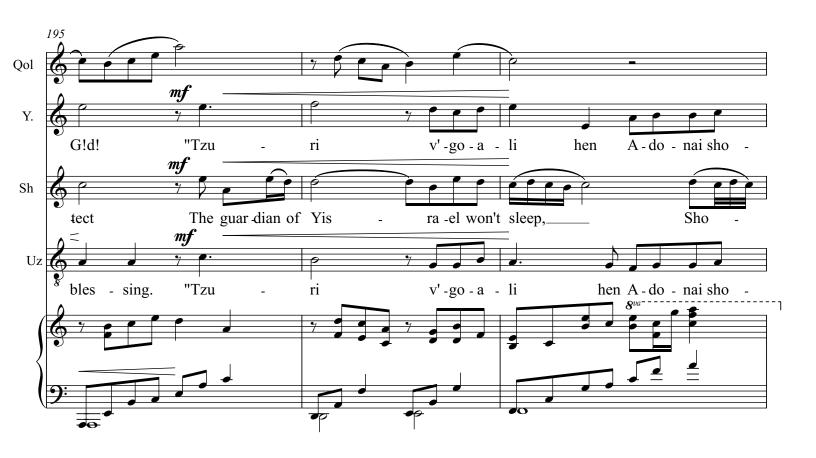


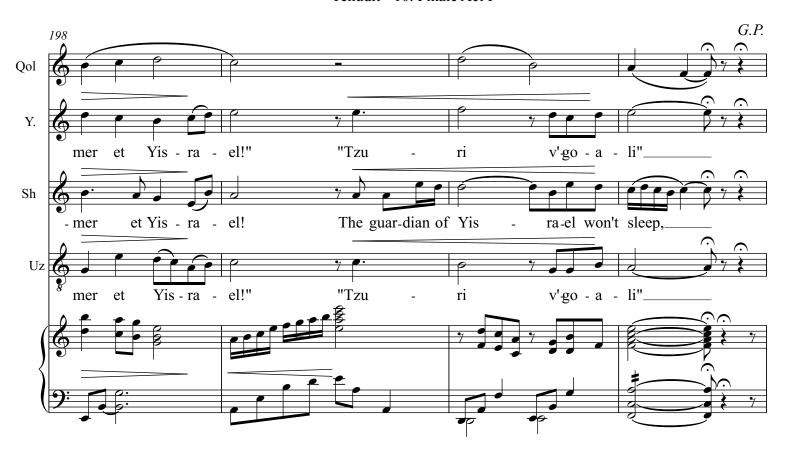


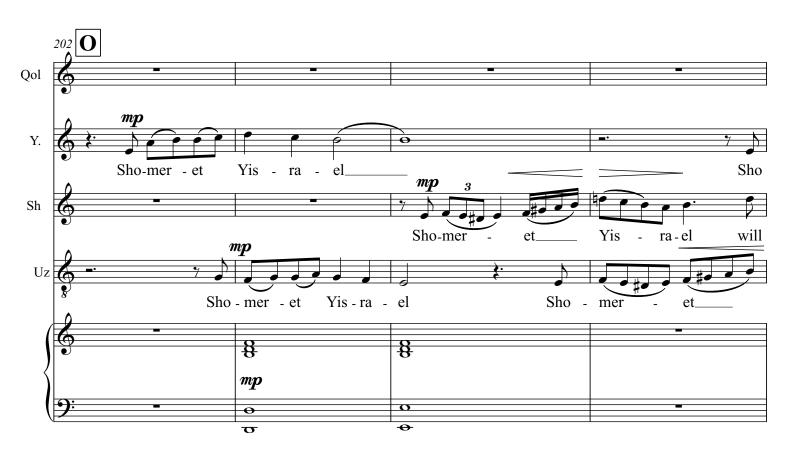
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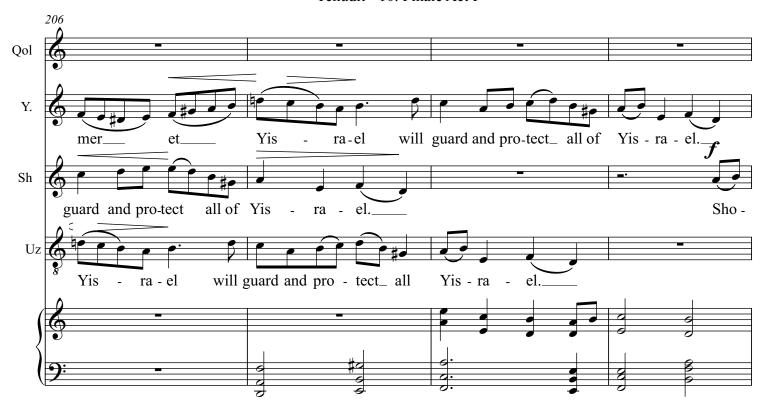


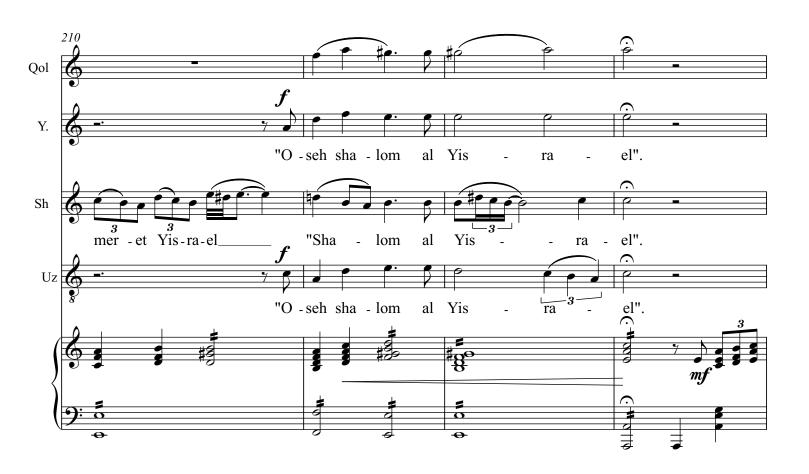


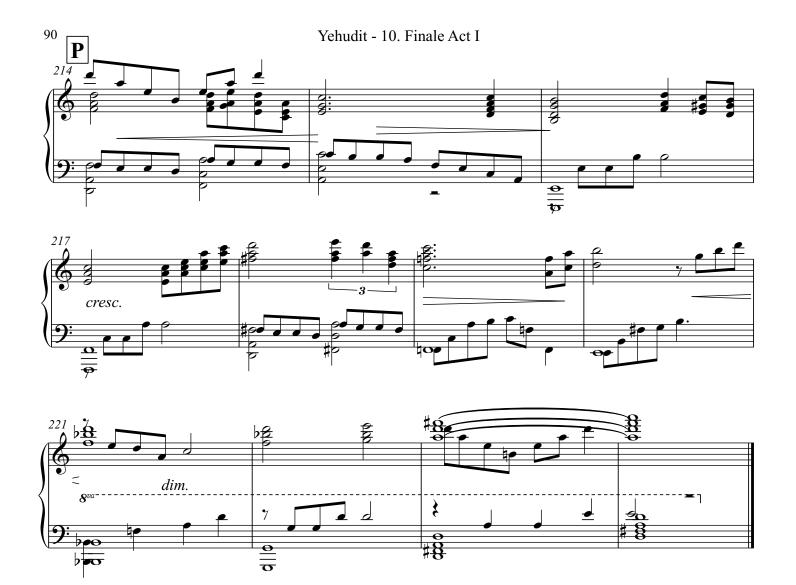












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11. G!D OF THE HUMBLE

Scene and duet - Yehudit - Bat-El

Early morning, Yehudit and Bat-El left Betulia. They took with them food supply for a few days, as wel as wine and cheeses for their mission. They are making their way into the Assyrean camp.



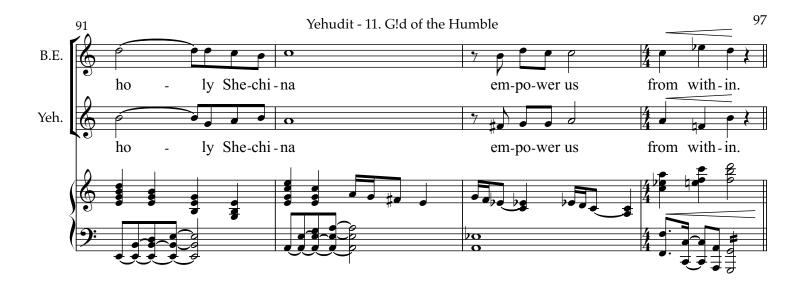














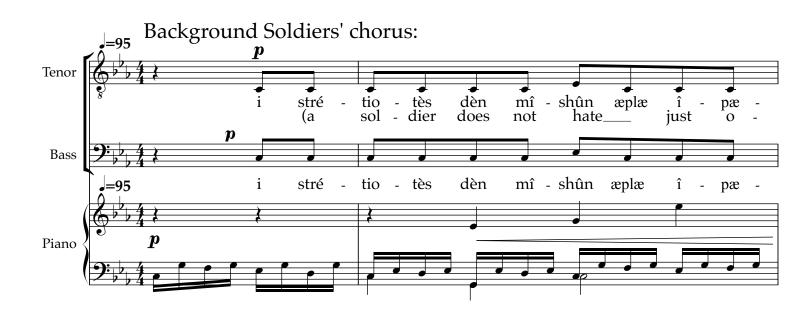


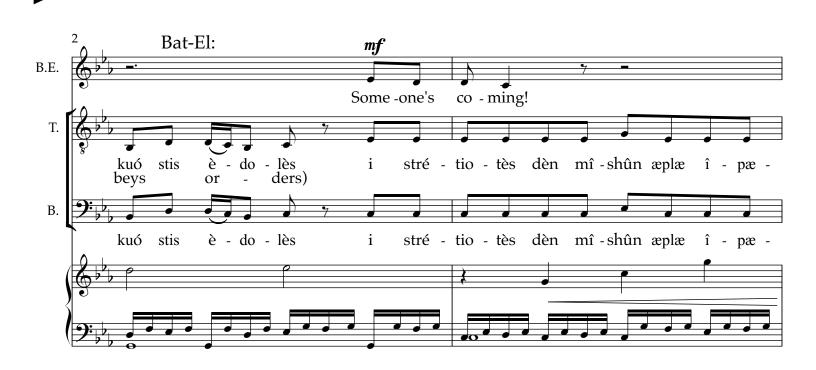


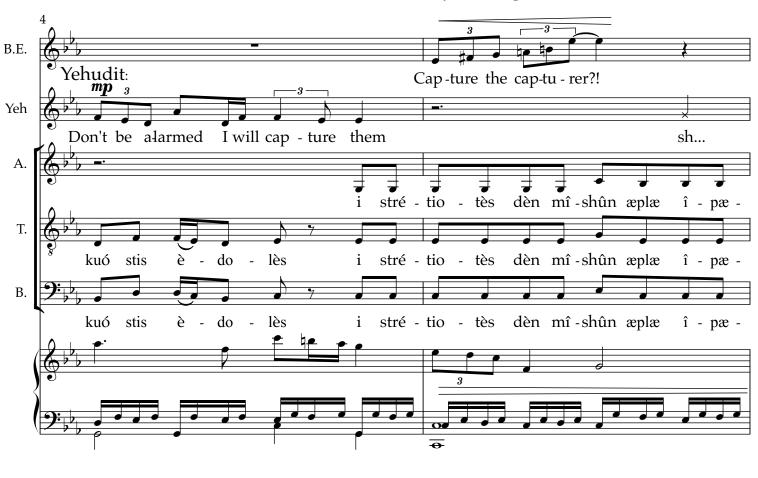
Segue to #12 - From the back, the sounds of the soldiers singing is heard.

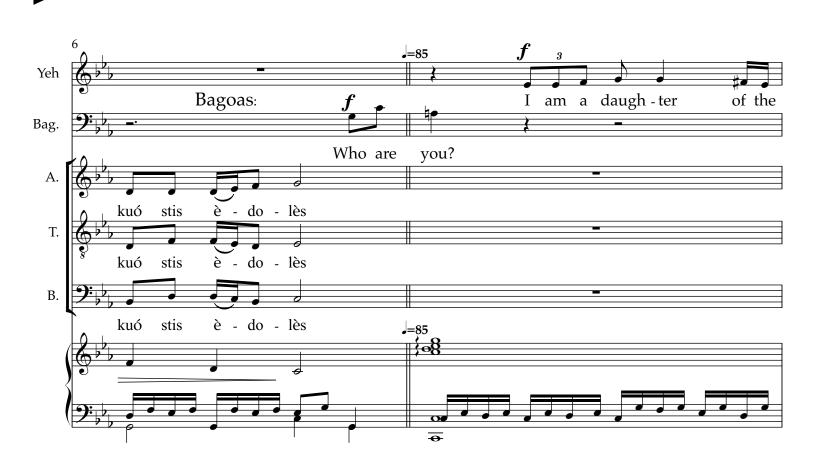
12. Scene - at the Assyrian camp

Bagoas, Yehudit, Bat-El & background soldiers' chorus

















Updated Jul 23'

13. Yehudit and Holofernes meet























Updated: Jul 23'

14. Comprimarios' lament

Bagoas - Bat-El Scene



Yehudit - 14. Conprimarios' Lament



Yehudit - 14. Conprimarios' Lament







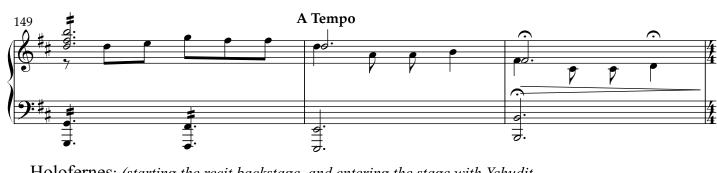
Yehudit - 14. Conprimarios' Lament



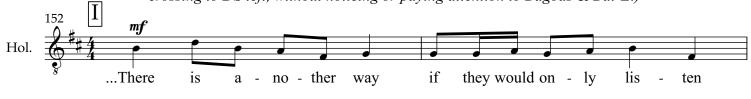
Yehudit - 14. Conprimarios' Lament







Holofernes: (starting the recit backstage, and entering the stage with Yehudit, crossing to DS left, without noticing or paying attention to Bagoas & Bat-El)









15. Let Me Be Your Safeguard

Quartet: Bat-El, Yehudit, Holofernes & Bagoas





Yehudit - 15. Quartet - Let Me Be Your Safeguard



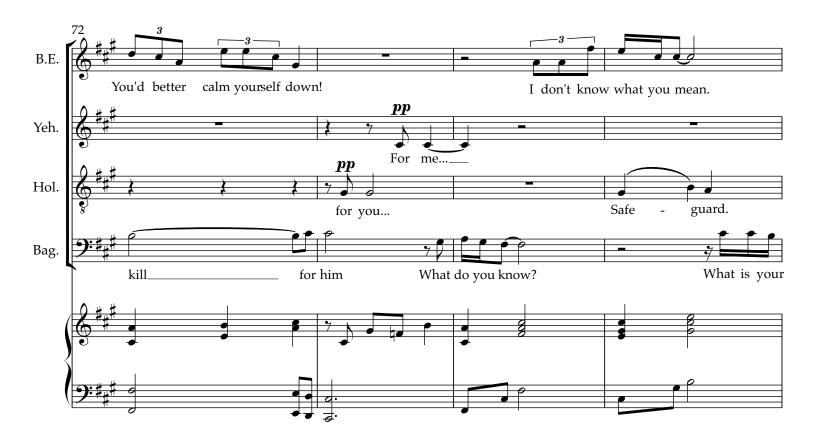


Yehudit - 15. Quartet - Let Me Be Your Safeguard





















Hol: (to Bagoas) Bagoas! Let's get ready for the party!
Bring my beauty some appropriate attire.
(Curtsy to Yehudit) I will see you there.



16. Scene - Who am !?





Yehudit - 16. Scene - Who am I?



Yehudit - 16. Scene - Who am I?



Yehudit - 16. Scene - Who am I?



Updated: Jul 23'

17. Drinking Song ~ Let Me Climb The Palm







Holofernes will sing a line, and will wait to see if the bar tender can replay it on the wine mugs in the right notes. He will proceed to taking one mug off after every phrase, and give it to someone to drink. As the opportunities for notes decrease, the Bartender is becoming more creative. For this creativity, the entertained Holofernes will reward the bartender.







Yehudit - 17. Drinking Song - Let Me Climb The Palm





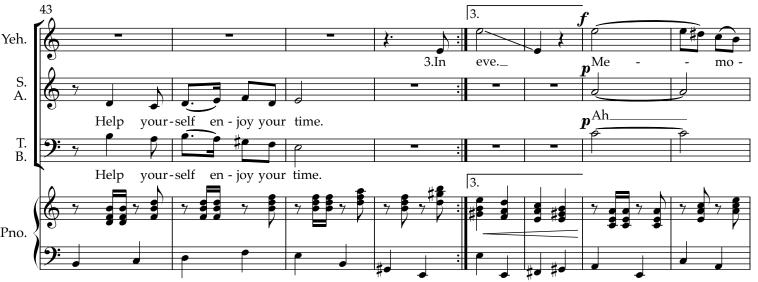


Yehudit: I would, my Lord.

18. Acrostic Hora











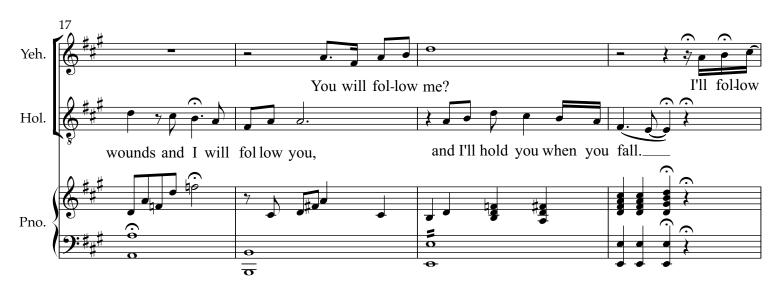




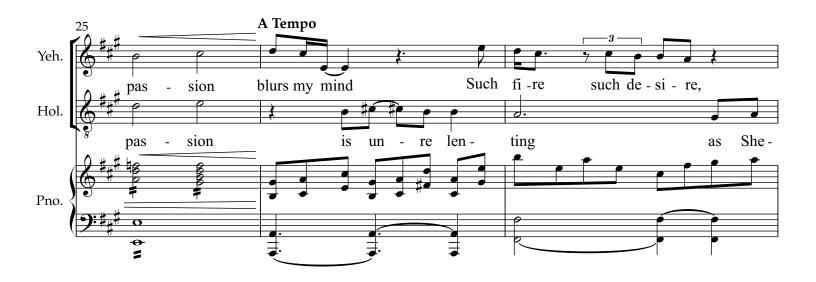
19. Duet - Follow You Yehudit & Holofernes

(Holofernes is smiling, Yehudit is horrified, starting to cry. He picks her head up with both his hands.) Holofernes: I didn't want to make you sad ... I'm sorry... Yehudit (collecting herself): I'm fine...

















20. Yehudit & Holofernes Love scene

Instrumental













21. A Light to Kill

The decapitation Aria









Yehudit strikes his head with his sword. Lights off

Updated Jul 23'

22. Scene - Open The Gates

Shai, Bat-Qol, Yehudit, Bat-El, Uziyahu, Achior and the people of Bethulia

Scene Change. In Betulia. The Gates are closed. Night. Shai lights the 7th Torch, Waiting impatiently for the return of Yehudit, or for alerting the troops that the enemy is approaching.

























Everybody looks at Uziyahu, as he slowly unveils the head, severely stares at Holofernes' face, then mockingly, let out a smile and a snir, and raises the head up high for all to see:

Uziyahu: My good people, our G!d has given us a sign! Bat-El: (*whispering*) But it was Yehudit!

cresc...

(*Uziyahu stares at her angrily for interrupting*).

23. Chatzi Kaddish Uziyahu and All the people of Betulia















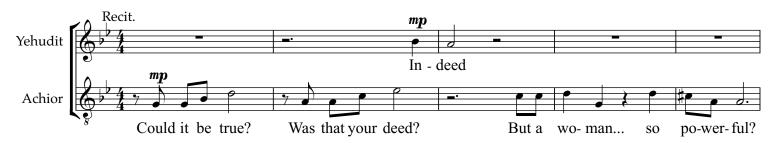


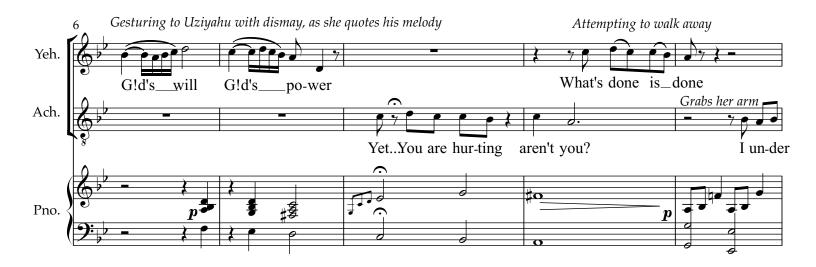


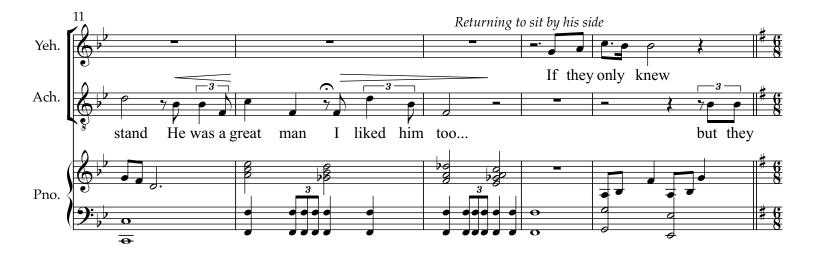
24. May your story be a Torah

Scene - Achior Yehudit

Achior came to sit by mourning Yehudit's side, while everybody praises Uziyahu.









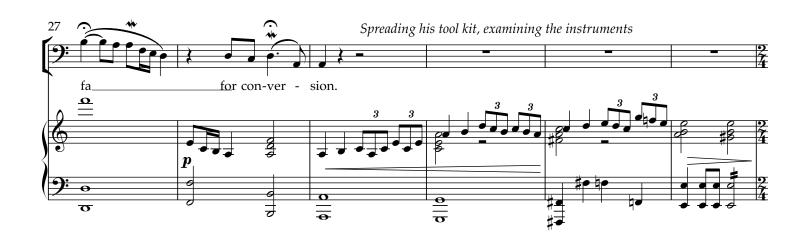


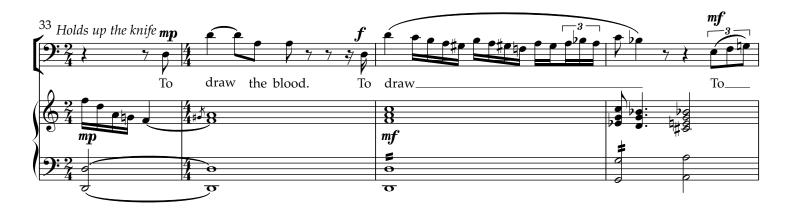
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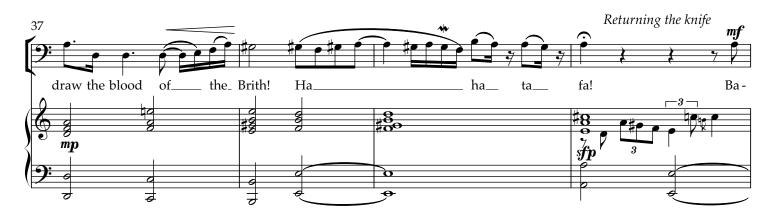
25. Hatafa - Achior's conversion Blessing of the Mohel



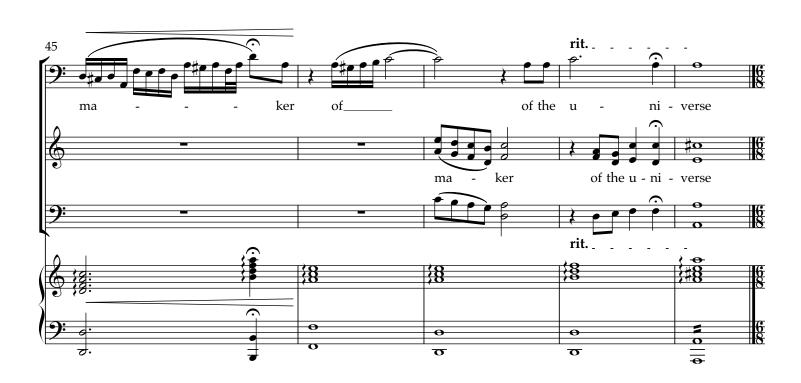










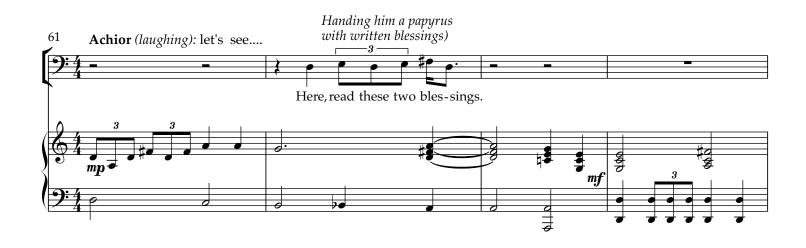


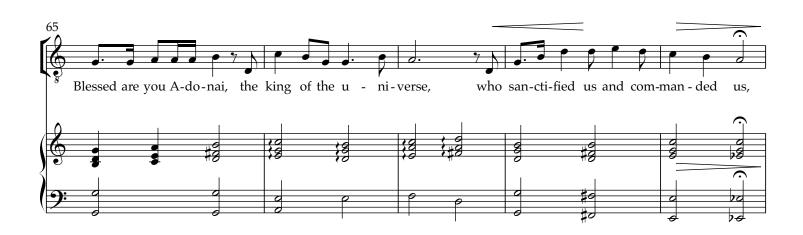
Mohel & Achior turning their back to the audience for the Hatafa

Incision 3 drops of blood

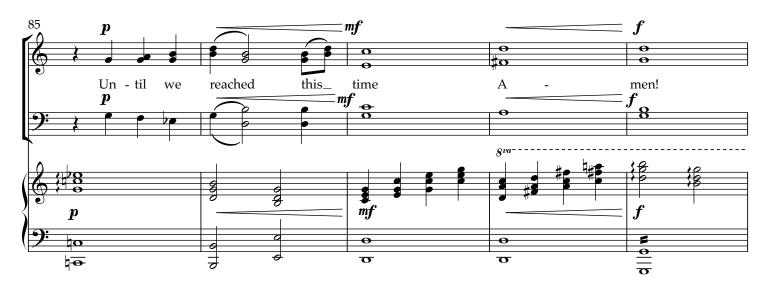


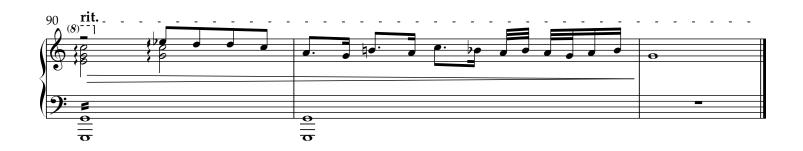












Uziyahu (shakes Mohel's, and then Achior's hands): "Mazal Tov".

Everybody gathers around Achior to loudly congratulate Achior, the Priest and the Mohel.

Everybody freezes except the sobbing Yehudit.

Spot light on Serah Bat Asher, entering the stage Walking toward Yehudit.

26. Serah Recit - The holiday of the daughters





Yehudít - Fínale 27. Halleluyah

















