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THE LIFE AND WORK OF AMINADAV ALONI

SETH WARNER

THESIS SUMMARY

This project begins with the biography of Aminadav Aloni. After Aloni's biographical history is explained, an examination of his musical output is given. A cross-section of his music output was chosen for these chapters to gain an appreciation of the diversity not just of his synagogue music, but his settings of other Jewish texts as well. The final chapter puts Aloni into context with other twentieth century composers (both early and late). After establishing his context, conclusions are made which summarize Aloni's musical output and contribution to Jewish music and suggest ways of fully appreciating his work.

Six chapters are included in addition to the introduction: (1) the biography of Aminadav Aloni; (2) the general description and analysis of Aloni's Jewish musical output including several services and collections; (3) the musical analysis of *S'fatai Tiftach* collection; (4) the full musical analysis of *Ahavat Olam for High Holy Days* and *V'shamru* from *S'fatai Tiftach* (including annotated musical scores, see Appendices A and B); (5) placing Aloni into context with other composers of Jewish music and concluding statements with regard to the research.

Additionally included are several appendices. They contain the catalog of Aloni's Jewish musical output and music published by Transcontinental Music Publications. His catalog of commercial music represented by the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP) is also included.

Seven interviews with people close to Aloni were conducted in order to augment the published journals, books and articles on twentieth century composers of Jewish music.

THE LIFE AND WORK OF AMINADAV ALONI

SETH WARNER

**Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of
Requirements for Master of Sacred Music Degree**

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

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Advisor: Cantor Benjie-Ellen Schiller

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INTRODUCTION

This project begins with the biography of Aminadav Aloni. After Aloni's biographical history is explained, an examination of his musical output is given. A cross-section of his music output was chosen for these chapters to gain an appreciation of the diversity not just of his synagogue music, but his settings of other Jewish texts as well. The final chapter puts Aloni into context with other twentieth century composers (both early and late). After establishing his context, conclusions are made which summarize Aloni's musical output and contribution to Jewish music and suggest ways of fully appreciating his work.

Aminadav Aloni (1928-1999) dedicated the last two decades of his life to the composition and performance of Jewish music. His collection of Jewish compositions represents a diverse cross-section of musical styles and genres. His musical settings of liturgical and non-liturgical Jewish texts are sensitive to their subject and challenge the listener in a number of ways. Many of his synagogue works include sections appropriate for congregational singing. Other, non-liturgical works set poetry in an avant-garde style.

His extensive musical output offers a glimpse into his personality and his vision of synagogue worship through music. Dr. Mark Kligman cites early twentieth century composers such as Isadore Freed, Abraham W. Binder and Herbert Fromm as seeking "to

upgrade the artistic standards and improve the state of music in Reform synagogues."¹

Late twentieth century composers, like Aloni, build on the musical achievement of their predecessors. Aloni uses musical devices like syncopated rhythms and melodies that congregations can easily sing to take his music one step further than his pioneering predecessors. He seeks to upgrade the level of congregational participation while keeping the authenticity and artistic standards established by his early twentieth century counterparts.

Because he composed in a wide range of styles, looking at one or two of Aloni's compositions does not adequately frame his Jewish musical output. In order to fully appreciate the breadth of his musical output, an in-depth study of a significant number of his pieces is necessary.

¹Mark Kligman, "Composers of the SSM: Isadore Freed," Paper Presented at *Music, Spirit & Scholarship: The Legacy of Eduard Birnbaum*, School of Sacred Music 50th Anniversary, New York, November 22-23, 1998, 1.

CHAPTER ONE – BIOGRAPHY

Aminadav Aloni (Ami) was born in Tel Aviv on September 14, 1928 to Zionist pioneers Miriam and Benyamin Zvi Aloni. Miriam and Benyamin both emigrated to Palestine under different circumstances. One of seven children, Benyamin was brought up moving around Russia and Poland to avoid persecution. Solonge meaning “acorn was the family name and Benyamin changed it to Aloni, literally meaning “my oak tree.” In 1921, Benyamin moved from Kolno, Poland to Northern Palestine and sent for the rest of his family. Four of the Solonge siblings found refuge in Palestine near their brother almost immediately. Two of Benyamin’s sisters chose to remain in Poland. Sadly, one sister died with her family in the tragedy of the Holocaust. The other sister miraculously survived the Holocaust and made *Aliyah* to Israel following World War II.

Ami’s mother, Miriam Reitman, had emigrated from Russia with her five siblings and met Benyamin in Palestine. The two were married and Ami was born into a large extended family. Because they all lived closely together, his relationship with his family was very close. They were all about the same age and were all brought up as siblings.² Miriam had one miscarriage several years later, so Ami was Benyamin and Miriam’s only child.

Ami’s musical career began at an early age; his parents noted that he was exceptionally musically aware even before he started school. “When he was two or three years old, he was taken to a movie. After coming home, he was playing on the piano and

²Dori Meshi, e-mail correspondence received by author, 14 November 2000.

picked out the tune from the movie.”³

Raised in an Orthodox home and frequenting the synagogue, Ami was exposed often to the music of the synagogue. Benyamin owned a yeast business during Ami’s childhood and was considered a well-known businessman. He provided a stable home for his family in Haifa. His family was known so well according to Ami’s son David, that his grandfather, Benyamin, told him if he ever wanted to write to him from the United States, he only had to write “Benyamin Aloni, Haifa, Israel” on the envelope, and it would get there.

Ami’s childhood, as he reported it to David years later, was not without its problems. Ami felt that his mother was overprotective of him and did not allow him to have a normal childhood. His mother wanted to shelter her only child. The maternal sheltering spoken of here is, in part, responsible for Ami moving to America to avoid the imminent War of Independence.⁴

In high school where Ami excelled as a student, he took classes in algebra, calculus and trigonometry, physics and music. All areas of mathematics were of particular interest to Ami. He attended the Reali School in Haifa, and was a star on the school’s track team.⁵ Concurrently, he was studying piano seriously. His progress as a young pianist was such that his skills surpassed those of his teachers at an early age.

³Ibid.

⁴David Aloni, telephone interview by author, 14 November 2000.

⁵So successful as a short distance runner, years later in the United States, he received a letter requesting the he return to represent Israel in the Olympics. Because he had already moved to the United States, he respectfully declined the offer of the Israeli Olympic committee.

In 1946 at age eighteen Ami and his older cousin, Avinoam Shor moved to America. According to Ami's daughter Dori Meshi, he was sent to America to continue his piano study at an advanced level. Other inferences about what caused Aloni to move to America come from his son David. His parents did not want him to fight in the Israeli army. Meshi recounts as a child that Ami's piano career was more a dream of Miriam's than of Ami's. Still learning English when he arrived in the United States, Ami found it easier to study music than to continue his study of mathematics.⁶

Aloni studied piano at Los Angeles City College (LACC) and for a short time in New York, but never graduated. He met JoRaela Feinblatt, an LACC voice student in a class for which he was the accompanist. JoRaela and her friend Marni Nixon befriended Ami, and they became friends as they rehearsed together.

The relationship blossomed and Aloni and JoRaela were married in a civil ceremony in Los Angeles in 1949. When Aloni's parents came from Israel to visit their son in Los Angeles in late 1949, they found him married and his new wife pregnant. At their insistence, the couple was married under a *chuppah* in a Jewish ceremony on November 20, 1949. Their son David was born in February, 1950.

JoRaela and Ami were very much alike. They were both musicians, both loved games such as chess and both had an incurable sense of adventure. In September of 1951, their second child, Dori was born. By the time Ami was 23 years old, the couple had two children to care for and in addition to that personal responsibility, they had serious financial concerns as well. To help ease the pressure, they chose, with much suggestion

⁶Meshi, *Ibid.*

from Ami, to move to Israel in close proximity to Ami's parents.

In January 1952 the couple moved into an apartment on the Carmel in Haifa. Void of running water and under heavy food rationing, their lifestyle in northern Israel was a significant change for the couple and their young children because of the political situation in the newly formed state. JoRaela did not react favorably to this lifestyle change.

According to Dori, JoRaela was unaccustomed to the difficulties living in Israel presented.

Less than a year later, she became seriously ill and was advised by her Israeli doctors to return to the United States for treatment. The lifestyle change combined with her homesickness for the United States undoubtedly contributed to her illness. Traveling with daughter Dori back to the U.S. with a severe case of pneumonia, JoRaela was treated and recovered quickly with her mother in Los Angeles. David stayed in Israel with Ami for six months before the Israeli army granted Ami's request to leave the country with his son.

The four settled in JoRaela's mother's Los Angeles apartment for the next several months.

Shortly after his return to the U.S., Ami began teaching piano privately and performing at a local Los Angeles nightclub. His hours were long and his schedule kept him away from home for much of the day and into the night.

One late night in July, 1953, the family set out for Berkeley, California to visit JoRaela's sister. According to the two children, who were asleep in the backseat of the car, Ami fell asleep at the wheel.⁷ Dori recalls that both her and her brother were ejected

⁷Because of the severity of the impact in the accident, no one remembers, including the two children, who was driving the car.

from the car but suffered no major injuries. According to David, JoRaela remained conscious after the accident and took charge of the scene, assisting police and medical technicians. Ami, however, was unconscious and seriously injured.

All four were taken to the hospital. Ami's injuries were life threatening and he was treated immediately by trauma center staff. JoRaela, who was taking care of the children in the emergency room suddenly began to feel ill. Her skin had become jaundiced since the accident. Only then was it discovered that she had sustained a serious internal injury to her liver. She was immediately taken to the operating room for emergency surgery. Shortly after being brought to the recovery room and still unconscious, she died.

Ami remained unconscious for some time, his condition not improving.⁸ His doctor insisted that Ami's two children sit in the room and talk to him. To the surprise of his doctors, Ami made a slow but remarkable recovery. While unconscious, Ami would later remember being in a hospital bed hearing his two children talking to him and realizing that he could not die.⁹ Unfortunately, Ami's miraculous recovery was overshadowed by the tragic death of his wife.

JoRaela's mourning parents took Dori and David back into their home in Los Angeles. Ami joined them within a few months following his rehabilitation, renting the vacant apartment next door. Ami was free to work because the children were in the loving care of their grandparents. In addition to his private teaching and nightclub

⁸Both children do not remember how long their father remained comatose, but both now understand the severity of their father's potentially life threatening condition.

⁹Meshi, Ibid.

performing, Ami was demonstrating and selling pianos at Dave Abel's Pianos, a local Los Angeles piano store.

David recalls this time as a particularly happy time for him, his older sister and his father. The three grew closer, living everyday to the fullest as Ami continued to struggle as a performer, teacher and salesman of pianos. The family enjoyed many outings. David's memories of this part of his childhood focuses on many visits to parks, miniature golf courses and other outdoor activities enjoyed by the family.

Some six years later, Ami met Joanne Johnson. She was enrolled in dance classes where Ami was the pianist. She remarked that dancers would not sign up for the classes taught by the best teachers. They would attend the classes that Ami was playing so that the dancers could admire his good looks.

After a brief dating period, they were married on June 7, 1959. Their only child, Daniel was born August 19, 1964. The two were divorced in 1983.

Ami's mother died of a heart attack on *Rosh Hashanah*, 1966. In 1969 Ami was diagnosed with Hodgkin's disease. While his prognosis for survival was not good, his doctors suggested a series of radiation treatments.¹⁰ According to Dori, doctors told Ami it was likely that some kind of cancer would return within twenty-five years as a result of the radiation treatment. It was twenty-six years later that the multiple myeloma cancer was diagnosed that would eventually be the cause of his death.

Shortly after his separation and divorce from Joanne Johnson, Aloni met Nicole

¹⁰Treating cancer with radiation was still relatively experimental in 1969. Doses of radiation were not accurate and possible side-effects included cancer returning at a later date.

Hamilton. The two met when Nicole was director of catering for the Los Angeles Music Center. Her love of catering and gourmet food came in her teens when she became a personal chef. She honed her skills at La Varenne, Ecole de Cuisine in Paris, France. Upon her return to California, she directed prestigious catering businesses and operated a restaurant. Her long list of catering credits includes, among others, the Academy Awards and galas honoring Presidents Reagan and Carter.¹¹ Nicole's first book, *Secrets From a Caterer's Kitchen* from Penguin Putnam is due out in early 2001.

They married and settled in her hometown, Laguna Beach, south of Los Angeles. He would be happily married to Nicole until his death in 1999. A catering specialist and head of the Aminadav Aloni Music Foundation, Nicole travels promoting her new book and working for the foundation. The Aminadav Aloni Music Foundation, or AAMF, was created after the composer's death by a number of cantors, musicians and friends of Ami's to house the library of compositions he left behind. Many pieces were left without accompaniment or otherwise incomplete. The goal of the Foundation is to see the incomplete works through to completion and to serve as the distributor of all of his music.

Despite a loving marriage, Ami struggled privately with the guilt of leaving Israel. He felt that he had abandoned his homeland and his heritage. "Being a 'yored' [one who "descends" or leaves Israel] was a big thing for Ami, although he didn't much talk about it. It took him a long time to accept that he was more American than Israeli, and actually more than he wanted to be."¹²

¹¹Nicole Aloni, email correspondence received by author, 23 December, 2000.

¹²Meshi, *Ibid.*

Shortly after his 1969 Hodgkin's diagnosis, Ami began composing. According to Nicole, his Hodgkin's diagnosis made Ami acutely aware of his own mortality. She recounts that Ami began composing in order "leave something behind."¹³ At forty years old, Aloni was a concert pianist, master teacher, yet he had never composed. He was not content just performing, but wanted to leave behind a legacy. He said, "As a pianist I had a lot of fun. But I realized I was leaving nothing behind. I needed something to give me more expression, and it was writing. I decided I'd rather play my music instead of my playing theirs."¹⁴ Soon after starting to compose, he realized that he was good at it.

Aloni craved the financial success that commercial composing affords. He wanted financial reward for his compositions, perhaps equating financial success with the success of his music. He knew that if he achieved success, the success of his music would outlive him. He composed numerous scores for television and film, short documentaries and jingles.¹⁵

Aloni's heart, soul and true passion, according to his family, is contained in his Jewish compositions. He found that he was best able to express himself by writing Jewish music. While relying on commercial music for his financial stability, composing Jewish music was his true love.

Although his son David would classify his father as a secular, non-observant Jew,

¹³Nicole Aloni, personal interview by author, 13 January 2000.

¹⁴Michael Arkush, "Singing His Praises," Los Angeles Times, 23 October 1992, sec. Valley, p. 12.

¹⁵Because this thesis is concerned with Aloni's Jewish compositions, his commercial work has purposely not been examined. For a complete list of Aloni's commercial compositions, refer to the ASCAP listing found in Appendix G.

the liturgical texts and rituals learned during his childhood were ingrained into Ami's mind and soul. Those memories and that knowledge obviously stayed with him throughout his life taking a backseat role to performing and composing secular music. Aloni recalls his inspiration once he started composing: "You don't make money being a synagogue composer. . . Economically, the other stuff [secular music] has helped me underwrite the Jewish material."¹⁶

While becoming increasingly involved in the Jewish music scene in Los Angeles, Aloni relied on his secular music to financially support his family. Aside from television and film, Aloni composed, conducted and arranged material for popular performers as Lennon Sisters, Vikki Carr, Sarah Vaughn, Johnny Mathis, Ben Vereen and Pearl Bailey.¹⁷ From his own admission, his secular love was musical theatre. "I want to be a Broadway musical writer. It wouldn't take anything away from my Jewish music, but I have always loved Broadway musicals," he said.¹⁸

His introduction to Jewish music and American synagogue life came early in his career in Los Angeles. He was introduced to Cantor Samuel Fordis in 1953. Fordis, then cantor in Burbank, California, asked Aloni to accompany him in a concert.¹⁹ When Fordis

¹⁶Arkush, "Singing His Praises."

¹⁷Ibid, and the biography of Aminadav Aloni in a concert program of the American Conference of Cantors and The Guild of Temple Musicians entitled California Composers, 26 June 2000.

¹⁸Arkush, "Singing His Praises."

¹⁹His relationship with Fordis as a friend and colleague would last until his death almost fifty years later.

assumed the cantor's pulpit at Valley Beth Shalom (VBS)²⁰ in Encino, California in 1959, Aloni was asked shortly thereafter to accept the position of organist of the synagogue. He began his work at VBS in 1966 and was given the title "composer-in-residence and music director in 1977. He would spend three decades in this position creating a lasting legacy for himself in his role at Valley Beth Shalom.

Aloni took over direction of the volunteer choir and throughout his tenure he saw his choral program flourish. Through Aloni's efforts and dedication, the congregational choir of VBS became known as the premiere volunteer synagogue choir in Los Angeles. By the mid-1970s Aloni was composing quite extensively for the synagogue.²¹ He was being commissioned by cantors from all over the Los Angeles area. He engaged his volunteer choir in many of the premieres of his works.²² The VBS congregational choir joined forces with other church and synagogue volunteer choirs as well as professional chorales. They performed at Aloni premieres as well as other well known works. Together with university and professional chorales, they sang with some of the finest choir conductors in the region.

Aloni's job as VBS music director was not limited to his musical activity at the synagogue. In 1982, Richard A. Braun, M.D., a member of the VBS congregational choir, approached Aloni for help in founding the Jewish Music Commission of Los

²⁰Valley Beth Shalom is a Conservative synagogue under the rabbinic direction of esteemed scholar Rabbi Harold Schulweis.

²¹Aloni's composing career was succeeding all areas: commercially and through synagogue music.

²²Nicole Aloni, personal interview by author, 13 January 2000.

Angeles. Braun saw the need for a “clearinghouse” of Jewish music so that synagogues, musicians, composers and listeners in the Los Angeles area could have a way of sharing resources and communicating about Jewish music. The Commission was eager to help composers get their Jewish music introduced to the synagogue, to develop new venues for performing Jewish music and to be out-spoken and proactive in furthering all aspects of Jewish music in southern California. Braun and Aloni established the following goals for the Commission:

1. To explore our [Jews in any community] identity through Jewish music.
2. To support the commissioning of Jewish music for the synagogue and concert stage.
3. To create classes for composers to study Jewish music.
4. To bring new Jewish music to synagogues and communities throughout the country.
5. To initiate forums to discuss creativity in the broader Jewish musical community.
6. To establish a link among different cultures, and learn from one another.²³

Ami was asked to take a key position in the project, directing the musical endeavors of the entire organization. More important, Braun credits Aloni as one of those whose energy and vision led to the founding of the Commission.²⁴ Braun, who continues to direct the Commission, credits Aloni as instrumental in conceiving the institution’s initial mission statement and its subsequent success.

²³Jewish Music Commission, “Mission Statement,” from the Jewish Music Commission of Los Angeles website, <http://jmcla.org/mission.html>, accessed 24 September 2000.

²⁴Richard A. Braun, *Jewish Music Commission of Los Angeles*, “Remembering Aminadav Aloni,” from the organization’s website, <http://jmcla.org/amin.html>, accessed 21 September 2000.

While music director and composer-in-residence at VBS, Aloni was commissioned to write over one hundred works for cantors and synagogues in the Pacific southwest. He was commissioned extensively by Cantors Samuel Fordis and Herschel Fox at VBS; Cantor Nathan Lam at Stephen S. Wise Temple (Reform) in Bel-Air, CA; Cantor Chayim Frankel at Kehillat Israel (Reconstructionist) in Pacific Palisades, CA; Cantor Perryne Anker at Temple Shalom for the Arts (unaffiliated) in Beverly Hills; and Cantor Roslyn Barak at Temple Emanu-El (Reform) in San Francisco; as well as others from around the country.²⁵

Because he was commissioned so regularly by cantors in the southern California area, Aloni chose to publish and distribute his music on his own under Eriel Music, his own publishing label. Transcontinental Music, under the auspices of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations, published approximately one dozen of his works, some included in larger compilation volumes.²⁶ He did not agree with the laborious editorial process of Transcontinental Music; Aloni was often displeased with the lengthy publication postponements of his works. Because many of his compositions were commissioned by individual cantors or synagogues, Aloni did not see the need to present them all for consideration at larger publishing houses such as Transcontinental.

Cantor Nathan Lam at Stephen S. Wise Temple in Bel-Air, California commissioned Aloni extensively to compose complete services, children's music,

²⁵Nicole Aloni, *Ibid.*

²⁶See *Yamim Noraim*, Transcontinental Music Publications, for Aloni's *Ahavat Olam*.

individual liturgical texts and concert works. Lam was one of his biggest synagogue supporters and a close friend for over twenty years. "He's a great composer. . . He's one of the best at using modern musical sounds combined with traditional Jewish motifs."²⁷

The Jewish motives that Lam cites are elements of the traditional synagogue modes specific to a particular time of day, service and holiday.²⁸ Because of his advanced piano background and excellent ear, Aloni was able to blend a "modern" sound with traditional Jewish motives.

His different styles and variety in all he composed for the synagogue demonstrate not only his advanced background as a classical and jazz musician, but his experience as an accomplished composer/arranger of film and television, who possessed a keen understanding of popular and secular music.

His composing career started slowly and with much personal trepidation. "He spent... the first ten years of his composing getting over the expectation (in his own mind) that everything he wrote was going to be Bach, Beethoven or Mozart. If it wasn't, he did it over and over. He had an incredible sense of perfection that was almost paralytic."²⁹ He struggled to complete works for fear they were inferior. Toward the end of his life, he had developed a healthier balance between perfecting every note and completing a work by proofing and publishing it.

²⁷Arkush, "Singing His Praises."

²⁸See musical analysis for an in depth discussion of Aloni's use of motives and nusach in *Ahavat Olam* in chapter four.

²⁹Nicole Aloni, personal interview.

Ami died after his long and debilitating multiple myeloma cancer in August, 1999. When faced with a life threatening illness, Aminadav Aloni set out to create his own musical legacy. From a piano salesman, track star, to concert pianist and master piano teacher, Aloni wanted success as a composer. He made an admirable contribution to the commercial secular music world, but never achieved the fame he craved. Instead, he leaves us a volume of Jewish music which is uniquely diverse, demonstrating his compositional flexibility and creativity.

The success of Ami's music is attributable to his understanding of Jewish liturgy and Biblical texts, and his devotion to Hebrew literature, classic and modern, prose and poetry. His English lyrics reflect his gift of language even beyond his native tongue. All of this resulted in impeccable, daring and sometimes outrageous musical writing, full of light, wit, dance and poignancy. He was a passionate advocate of the best in music; secular and sacred.³⁰

After looking at only a small portion of his total output as a composer, his synagogue music, one can see and hear the vast palate from which Ami chose colors and timbres for his compositions. One collection of Jewish songs might be in a Medieval/Renaissance style with a cappella choir and intricate harmonies suitable for madrigal singing; while the next is a collection of music for childrens' choir and cantor appropriate for a Friday evening service; or a cycle of love songs by Sephardic poets written in a twentieth-century avant garde style. Other individual works are equally as

³⁰Noreen Green and Richard Braun, "In Memory of Aminadav Aloni," biography and memorial on the Los Angeles Jewish Symphony website: <http://lajs.home.att.net/bios/Aloni.htm>, accessed 21 September 2000.

diverse.

I have established that Aloni wrote commercial music for his financial success. On a personal level, his composing of Jewish music was a labor of love. He did not need the income, he did not need the work. He traveled to meet with cantors who commissioned him to get acquainted with their particular voice and style. He gave lectures at artist-in-residence weekends at a number of synagogues. For his Jewish music, he made sure that he understood the context and aesthetic he was writing for before sitting down to compose.

From growing up in an Orthodox synagogue in Israel to teaching piano and composing commercial music in Los Angeles, Aloni returned to his roots to compose music for the synagogue. “‘When I walk down the hall at the temple [VBS] and I see a five-year-old and his grandfather singing something I wrote, you can’t pay me enough money for that,’ he said. ‘That’s why I’ve stayed all these years.’”³¹

While he called his life full of “almosts,”³² Aminadav Aloni leaves behind a collection of Jewish music that was written from his heart and soul.

³¹Arkush, “Singing His Praises.”

³²Ibid.

CHAPTER TWO – MUSICAL OUTPUT

This chapter examines Aloni's Jewish music output. The majority of his compositions are in the form of services or collections; in addition, several individual settings exist.³³ A number of these services and individual works are annotated below. To best describe his total Jewish output, several services and collections are given particular attention so that specific styles and methods of Aloni's compositional technique can be understood.

There are three levels of analysis in the coming pages. Level one consists of a general description and brief analysis of a number of works. Level two, chapter three, is a more in-depth analysis of one entire work: *S'fatay Tiftach*, a collection of thirteen individual pieces for three and four part choir. Level three, chapter four, is a full musical analysis of two pieces, *V'shamru* and *Ahavat Olam*, with annotated scores and charts included in Appendix A and B.

Some of Aloni's compositions for the synagogue incorporate distinct Israeli melodic and rhythmic patterns. Some resemble an avant-garde compositional style, while others use Renaissance madrigal harmonies. Others sound like Broadway music, while others are composed in a different style altogether.

Aloni's setting of *Bar'chu* in Friday Evening Service Old & New, for example, utilizes *musach* themes of *Shabbat* while other pieces in the collection use contemporary rhythms and do not include *musach* at all. Motives indicative of his exposure to *hazzanut*

³³For a complete listing of Aloni's Jewish works, refer to Appendix D.

as a child in Israel are found in the cantorial line of the *Bar 'chu* mentioned above.

Embellishments of the High Holy Day *nusach* can be heard in his *Ahavat Olam* setting for *Rosh Hashanah*.

Terms to describe Aloni's settings include storytelling, experimental and avant-garde. These terms have well-known general meanings and are more clearly defined by the particular work they describe. In the *Hallel* setting, Aloni tells a descriptive musical story of the dramatic and praise-filled *Hallel* section of the liturgy using a musical theatre compositional style. Storytelling style refers to the incorporation of drama and a certain kind of expressivity of the text. Avant-garde refers to a composer's departure from tradition. Specific examples of these are explained in greater detail below.

Aleinu L'Shabeiach Jazz Service is best referred to as an experimental service because it sets an entire *Erev Shabbat* service to a jazz style. The definition of experimental for the purpose of this thesis is: the use of a particular musical style in which the music and text are seemingly diametrically opposed. Many of the works are similar in mood and setting. While the entire work is meditative and the melodies sublime, there are small nuances in which the music reflects the mood of a particular part of the *Erev Shabbat* liturgy. Although these nuances may be more obscure than in *Hallel*, they do exist. *Hashkivenu* [Cause Us], is set in a dialogue between the voice and accompaniment and offers meditative time in between the lines of the prayer. The Candle Blessing, on the other hand, is a more straight-forward, simple prayer with only one melodic line and minimal influence in the piano accompaniment.

The style of the *Circle of Love* song cycle is best described as avant-garde. Avant-

garde is the “term used in the arts to denote those who make a radical departure from tradition.”³⁴ This work, as will be demonstrated in the annotation below, is contemporary and esoteric in style. The vocal line and accompaniment are not necessarily linked together by melody or rhythm, and occasionally oppose each other altogether. The melodies are difficult and often dissonant. A melody is not likely to be hummed by a listener after a performance of this work.

³⁴Michael Kennedy, ed., *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Music*, 4th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 33.

Hallel

The *Hallel* service consists of six psalms and is recited during the *Shacharit* [morning] service on the three festivals, as well as *Channukah* and *Rosh Chodesh*. The psalms included in *Hallel* are psalms 113-118. These additions are made to the regular service on Holy days in order to commemorate times of the Jews' deliverance from peril. These particular psalms were selected because, according to a particular theology, they contain five fundamental themes of Judaism: the Exodus from Egypt, the parting of the Red Sea, the giving of Torah at Mount Sinai, the future resuscitation of the dead and the coming of the Messiah.³⁵

The musical forces in the setting are SATB choir and piano accompaniment.³⁶ There are many places in which the congregation is encouraged to participate. Aloni tells the story of these six psalms using the drama of musical theatre. Aloni fuses these two distinctly different entities together: Broadway musical-theatre compositional style with a liturgical text. The result is an upbeat, fast-paced service which guides the listener through the text of the psalms with appropriate musical nuances indicating the meaning and mood of the text. The Broadway musical style Aloni uses accents the stories and themes expressed in the different liturgical message of each of the psalms. *Hallel* tells the stories of the five fundamental themes of Judaism through the music. For example, the

³⁵Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur: Weekday/Sabbath/Festival*, (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1990), 632.

³⁶Aloni recorded this work with synthesizer and drums.

story of the Exodus from Egypt as told in ps. 114 is set to a marching beat. The listener can "hear" the Israelites leaving the confines of Pharaoh. This work is arguably the best example in Aloni's Jewish music collection of this type of composition.

While the work is relatively short (just over twenty minutes), there are three key techniques Aloni uses in *Hallel*:

1. the feeling of being told the story of *Hallel* using melodies, ala Broadway music;
2. dramatic use of musical devices (such as staccato and legato, soft and loud) to indicate the shifting of mood;
3. repetition of text

This work is meant to be performed from beginning to end without interruption. The listener is taken from the calm opening blessing of *Hallel* to a rock beat *Halleluyah* expressing unfettered praise of God. The refrain is geared for a congregation to join in on the second and third repetitions. *M'kimi* is more subtle and tender, and the harmonies more romantic, reflecting the text, "He raises the needy from the dust, from the trash heaps He lifts the destitute. To seat them with nobles, with the nobles of His people. He transforms the barren wife into a glad mother of children."³⁷

B'tzeit Yisrael is the most memorable setting in this collection. The melody is simple, stately and set in a marching beat. Probably the most musical theatre style piece of this composition, Aloni uses the drama of the text (see above) and a repeating congregational refrain in conjunction with a singable and memorable melody for the

³⁷Ibid, 632.

congregation.

Lo Lanu is fast, staccato and has a rushed feeling. Aloni employs varying degrees of syncopation and soft dynamics which accentuate the urgency and importance of the refrain: "Not for our sake, God, not for our sake, but for Your Name's sake give glory."³⁸ While rhythmically complex, the melody of the refrain is sufficiently repeated in the work so that the congregation can learn it relatively quickly and participate in its repetition.

Adonai Z'charanu Y'vareich begins with a short solo until the choir joins in an *andante* tempo. The refrain repeats the "y'vareich" [will bless] a number of times in each repetition. The setting is balanced between the legato treble voices exclaiming the blessings that God will bestow on the House of Israel, and the bellow of the male voices between the heavens and the earth which belong to God and humankind respectively. The text "*Halleluyah*" appears at the end of ps. 114. The melody is reminiscent of the "*Halleluyah*" setting referred to earlier.

Shuvi Nafshi is the love song in Aloni's representation of *Hallel*. The tempo is slow, the melody repetitive. The music is reflective in keeping with the first person text of psalm 116. The psalm focuses on the love and salvation that God delivers. Aloni mirrors that love in a soothing and loving melody using legato and long vocal lines. "Return, my soul, to your rest; for God has been kind to you. For You have delivered my soul from death, me eyes from tears, my feet from stumbling. I shall walk before God in the lands of the living." The melody does not change despite the change of mood in the text to: " I

³⁸Ibid, 635.

have kept faith although I say: 'I suffer exceedingly.' I said my haste: 'All mankind is deceitful.'"³⁹

Ma Ashiv L'adonai maintains the dramatic flair of this composition. The text asks, "How can I repay God for all His kindness to me?" The answer: "to raise the cup of thanksgiving." The melody is fast and syncopated and is sung by the bass voices in an expressive yet slovenly, almost drunken manner. The illusion of intoxication is in keeping with story-telling, dramatic nature which characterizes this entire setting. The treble voices sing the verses in a calming, mellow tone, yet remain within the syncopation set forth by the bass voices.

Hal'lu et Adonai is the setting of psalm 117: "Praise God, all nations; praise Him, all the states! For His kindness has overwhelmed us, and the truth of God is eternal, Halleluyah!"⁴⁰ The setting is reminiscent of a love ballad. Aloni repeats text and melody so that the congregation can sing with the choir. He repeats *l'olam* [forever] to convey the meaning of the Hebrew in a similar way to his repetition of the same text in *Ahavat Olam* setting for High Holy Days (See Chapter Four).

Hodu L'adonai is a simple text in which the congregation traditionally responds to four statements:

Give thanks to God for He is Good: His kindness endures forever!
 Let Israel say: His kindness endures forever!
 Let the House of Aaron say: His kindness endures forever!

³⁹Ibid, 637.

⁴⁰Ibid, 639

Let those who fear God say: His kindness endures forever!⁴¹

On the whole, this work is quite simple because the text is short and Aloni chose not to elaborate on it. The setting uses staccato versus legato to differentiate the choir line from the congregational responses.

Pitchu Li is slow and reflective. The text states, "Open for me the gates of righteousness, I will enter them and thank God. This is the gate of God; the righteous shall enter through it."⁴² The choir sings in a plaintive unison after the accompaniment states the main musical theme of this short piece. The text of the psalm is in first person and Aloni sets it in long legato phrases for a petitionary effect.

Ana Adonai is fast, syncopated and expresses the text in a rhythmically exciting way. There is a sense of urgency in the music corresponding with the urgency of the psalm. "Please, God, save now! Please, God, bring success now!"⁴³ "Ana," [please], is repeated in different rhythmic patterns at the beginning of each of the lines of this text.

In conclusion, *Hallel* tells the story of the psalms. Aloni conveys the drama of the psalm texts in ways common to musical theatre. Texts are often repeated, compositional effects such as staccato, legato and broad dynamic range express the meaning of the texts. The melodies are syncopated and interesting, yet memorable and easy to sing. Aloni's skills as a composer of commercial music for television are at work here. Many melodies, such as *B'tzeit Yisrael* and *Lo Lamu*, sound familiar to the listener on the first hearing.

⁴¹Ibid, 638.

⁴²Ibid, 641.

⁴³Ibid.

Aleinu L'Shabeiach - A Jazz Service

Aleinu L'Shabeiach - A Jazz Service was written in 1999, near the end of the composer's life. For cantor, choir and jazz combo, this work is recorded by Cantor Steve Levin of Vancouver, British Columbia as a concert program. Clearly, the work was intended as an experiment in the most contemporary jazz style. *Aleinu L'Shabeiach* does not tell a story, rather it maintains a jazz feeling throughout, and lacks much musical variation. Despite the various themes of love, redemption and revelation touched on in the *Erev Shabbat* service, the jazz style dominates *Aleinu L'Shabeiach*, expressing the liturgical themes in one particular style.

The work gives the impression of improvisation although it is written out with clear notation and explanations of the nuances in both the accompaniment and vocal lines.

The selections which exemplify most clearly Aloni's use of text in a jazz style are *Ma'ariv Aravim*, the prayer for the evening surrounding the *Sh'ma*; *Hashkivenu*, the prayer for rest and renewal and *Eitz Chayim*, the proclamation of the goodness of Torah.

Ma'ariv Aravim is set so that the text is lyrically expressed in an ascending pattern with only arpeggiated piano accompaniment. The *p'tichah* [opening line] and *chatimah* [closing line] share the same melody giving the work a clear beginning and ending. The arpeggio chords in the beginning of the work grow in intensity toward the middle. The chords then return, as in the beginning of the piece, to the calm feeling, signaling the end of the work.

Aloni's liturgical understanding is woven into *Ma'ariv Aravim* work in the

following way. The text indicates that "God renews the work of creation day by day... May the living and enduring God continuously reign over us..."⁴⁴ The general dynamic and phrasing of the work is cyclically similar.

Hashkivenu is set with slightly more complex piano accompaniment with distinct melodic motives, unlike *Ma'ariv Aravim*. The piano plays a more active role and interacts with the vocal line, as is typical in jazz style composition. *Hashkivenu* asks God "to cause us to lie down in peace and awaken renewed the next day." God is asked to "protect us from evil and to safeguard our going out and our coming in." We ask that "God spread over us the shelter of God's peace." The feeling of the work is meditative; there is plenty of time between sentences to internalize and reflect upon the mood of relaxation and rest. Without sounding like a lullaby, Aloni gives *Hashkivenu* a peaceful and meditative feel. The vocal line is shaped to give the feeling of warmth and security as in the very meaning of the prayer. The accompaniment plays the melody when the vocal line rests so that a dialogue is established. The tempo is free and unrushed, the vocal line is fluid and flows evenly. The dialogue occurs naturally, without either the piano or the voice entering obtrusively to interrupt the somber mood of this composition.

Eitz Chayim, "it is a tree of life [Torah] to those who grasp it, and all who uphold it are blessed. Its ways are ways of pleasantness, and all its paths are peace."⁴⁵ The meditative feeling of this work is unlike many existing settings of *Eitz Chayim* used in the

⁴⁴Ibid, 331.

⁴⁵Aminadav Aloni, *Aleinu L'Shabeiach - A Jazz Service*, compact disc liner notes, (Vancouver, B.C.: Zack Publications, 1974).

synagogue. The piece expresses the grandeur of Torah, and seems to be expressing the expression of the personal depth the Torah gives to each individual. The idea that Torah can be one's personal investment, (rather than or in addition to a majestic collection of holy writings) is a bold and fitting statement for the composer. His life was ending, he knew it. According to his family, especially his widow Nicole, Ami became more contemplative as his life ended. He reflected on his own accomplishments as a composer and worried about the longevity of his compositions. His relationships strengthened, especially with those cantors with whom he worked. He began to turn inward in his thinking. This work shows that very personal side of the composer through the reflective, somber tone of the music.

While many of the pieces in *Aleimu L'Shabeiach* sound similar on the first hearing, subsequent hearings reveal the nuances and subtleties. Moreover, the jazz sound Aloni creates does not sound fabricated or like fraudulent imitation, rather, it is original, authentic and represents a high level of understanding of the jazz style. In and of itself, that is not a remarkable accomplishment. What is remarkable is Aloni's ability to set this service authentically in a jazz style while maintaining the specific nuances of individual liturgical moments.

Old and New Services
Friday Evening Music & Saturday Morning Music

A discussion of fusion music would not be complete without looking at the simplest form of Aloni's compositional fusion. This form of musical fusion takes some traditional *nusach* motives from both *Erev Shabbat* and *Shabbat* morning, elaborates on some of them and ignores others. The reason these services are called old and new is just that, they make use of the traditional "old" *nusach* and the "new" is Aloni's embellishment and development of *nusach* in certain areas. Unlike other contemporary composers, such as Frederick Piket who was against the continuation of *nusach* in the American synagogue, Aloni embraced it and was rooted in it. In these services, he chose to incorporate *nusach* in certain liturgical settings and compose new melodies outside of the themes of *nusach*.

The Friday evening service is scored for cantor, unison choir and congregation with keyboard accompaniment. The settings vary widely from lively, spirited, staccato pieces, such as *Tov L'hodot*, to the more tranquil and meditative setting of *Hashkiveinu*. The elements of *nusach* appear in the *Bar'chu* and *Hashkivenu* settings. *Bar'chu* contains cantorial runs and coloratura with modern, yet unobtrusive accompaniment. The English translation of the *Ma'ariv Aravim* text follows with the absence of the *nusach* melody, but the triplet rhythm from the *nusach* of the preceding Hebrew section is carried through in both the melody and accompaniment.

Nusach is a little more obscured in the *Hashkivenu* setting by appearing as arpeggio chords in the accompaniment. The all Hebrew melody and the accompaniment

work together to deliver the *musach* and the theme of sleep, rest and awakening expressed in the liturgical text of the piece. The *musach* of this work and accompaniment that Aloni adds are calm and soothing. The melody is simple, void of large leaps centered around the pianissimo dynamic. The triplet feel is used again in this piece to convey the *parlando* timbre, a speaking style common in synagogue music.

The settings which do not use *musach* are revolutionary because they exist alongside pieces that do. The contemporary setting of *Tov L'hodot*, for example, begins the collection with a sprightly, fast tempo and memorable melody. The lack of traditional *musach* in several works in this composition does not take away from the prayerful, intrinsically Jewish feeling of the collection that the inclusion of *musach* provides. Much of the *Friday Evening Old and New Service* is appropriate for children's choir and congregational singing and experiments with the blending of *musach* motives and newly composed, contemporary music.

The Saturday morning service is scored for cantor, two-part choir (SATB choir for *K'dushah* only) and keyboard accompaniment. The range of works included in the collection is diverse, consisting of contemporary variations on *musach* such as in the fast-paced *Yism'chu* and the traditional setting of *R'tzei [Adonai Eloheinu] B'amcha Yisrael*. Occasionally, in order to give a *musach* theme (or his own theme) particular import, Aloni sets a particular melody to nonsense syllables and repeats the melody several times, then continues with the liturgical text. This method is found often in Aloni's work so the congregation can become accustomed to the melody and subsequently participate.

Circle of Love
Songs of Four Poems by Sephardic Authors

This avant-garde collection of songs represents Aloni's work with texts which are not tied to Jewish liturgical practice. These songs are taken from poems by Efraim Lutzato, Yaakov Francis, Tedros Ben Yehudah Abuleafiah and Emanuel Francis. Each has love as its central theme.

The compositional technique Aloni uses for the setting of these poems can be described as a contemporary, avant-garde style. In each, the composer is responding to the text of the poem with his melody and accompaniment. The *Circle of Love* and *S'fatai Tiftach* are Aloni's most contemporary settings. Both lack congregational refrains and require significant musical preparation on the part of the performers.

These pieces are rhythmically and melodically complex. Aloni's signature syncopation is present throughout. For both the singer and pianist, the four pieces increase in difficulty and require exacting detail to pitch and rhythm in order to negotiate the entrances and cut-offs.

Scored for baritone and piano, these pieces are complex textually because the allusions and other poetic devices used are not easily translated. The translation that Aloni provides gives a good indication of the ideas with which he worked to create these settings. Aloni wrote this cycle over the course of one week in early September, 1986. Cantor Sam Brown commissioned the cycle and premiered it shortly after its composition.

Yaldah Yafah Achat - Ephraim Luzato

One pretty girl, much in love,
 A doctor came to her house
 because her soul was hurting,
 and at night she couldn't rest.
 He touched her to see if she had a fever
 and his heart caught with fire.
 And when she asked him,
 "Is there any cure for me?"
 He answered,
 "My, dear, think about my wound this time -
 not the physician, but the patient am I."⁴⁶

This Luzato poem is set with a sixteenth note accompaniment and vocal line almost acting against each other. The text of this poem is about a patient who is visited by her doctor because his soul was hurting only to find that the doctor was in love. The two parts, the doctor and patient are represented by the juxtaposition of the piano and vocal lines. The text of the doctor's admission of love is transmitted magically in Aloni's expressive setting, using the vocal line in a declarative and expressive ascending melodic pattern.

The singer is very exposed, the piano serves as both accompaniment and as a character. The heartbeat of the patient can be heard throughout the beginning of the piece with the sixteenth note pattern in the piano. At the beginning of the piece, the rhythm is steady, then quickens to become abrupt as the doctor feels the patient's head and the piece continues.

Italian Hebrew poet, Ephraim Luzato (c.1729-1792), is recognized as "one of the

⁴⁶The translations of all four poems are taken from the second page of Aloni's score. Their translator is unknown.

first lyric voices heard in Hebrew literature."⁴⁷ His poems offer a blend of Jewish traditionalism and sensual awareness. Favoring the sonnet, Luzato is credited with making a significant contribution to the development of modern Hebrew literature by supplying it with what had previously been missing—the pure lyric.

Et Ezkerah Yom - Yaakov Francis

When I remember the day
like a burning fire was the cheek of the woman
and bitterly she cried.
Her hand was holding his
and her mouth was glued to the mouth of
her dead husband.
They couldn't separate her from him,
and in my desire for this woman
I wished I were dead.
And when I thought about
tasting her lips,
I wished for the day of my death
like the day of the Messiah.

Aloni sets this Yaakov Francis poem using a series of repeated piano syncopations. The speed of the melody and of the piano accents increases to the crown of the piece, "I wished I were dead." Musically speaking, Aloni creates this line of text by bringing the notes of the chords closer and closer together until, four measures before "Kirvi," [I wished] dissonance results from the closeness of the chords in the right hand. (See mm. 21-24.)

At the beginning of the piece, Aloni sets the text in parlando style with deliberate

⁴⁷David Mirsky, *The Life and Work Ephraim Luzzatto* (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1987), 1.

and syncopated chords. As the emotions of the poem are exposed, the melody too becomes more emotional with larger leaps in the vocal line and increasingly louder dynamics. This sense of urgency is evident as the piece builds to its high point, beginning with measure 14. The E^b appears for the first time in the vocal line in m. 14 and serves as the beginning of the emotional section of the work. Beginning in measure 21, the chords increase in their sense of urgency and lead to the work's climax. In the measures following the climax (measure 26,) the accompaniment uses open chords spacing and the vocal line slowly comes down from its "emotional peak" until the ritard in measure 31.

Jacob (Yaakov) Ben David ^{Francis} (1615-1667) is most well known as a satirical poet. He was born and lived in Mantua, received his grounding in Talmud from his father and continued his study with Shemaiah de Medina in Venice. Yaakov and his younger brother were vehemently opposed to the Kabbalah. Yaakov composed a poem condemning kabbalah and ridiculing the aberrations of mysticism. The Kabbalist rabbis of Mantua demanded the poem be immediately burned. His poetry is primarily inspired by politics.⁴⁸

Hatshuka Lih'yot Ishah - Todros Ben Judah Abulafia

I became sick with love
 I fell in the trap of an Arabic woman.
 My soul wished
 to kiss her mouth -
 and I wanted to be a female,
 because she is kissing the girls,
 And because I am a man - I lost out.

⁴⁸*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, n.d., s.v. "Frances, Jacob Ben David."

This poem by Abulafia describes the inner thoughts of a man in love with a woman, almost as if it is a dream sequence. Likewise, Aloni sets the piano accompaniment in a series of repeating syncopated patterns indicative of a dream. Aloni repeats the first five lines of the poem exactly in his setting. The syncopated rhythmic pattern establishes a repeating theme throughout the piece. While the piano is playing this pattern, the vocal line imitates this pattern but in an esoteric way. The two parts, vocal and accompaniment, are together rhythmically throughout the first section, yet there is a disjunct feeling in melody between the two.

The second section of the piece sets the last two lines of the text in a more recitative style, with sparse chords held over bar lines. The melody, however, never loses the syncopated rhythm indicative of the dream. The text ends, but to end the work, Aloni restates the accompaniment from the first section of the work to propel the dream sequence motif. As this cycle continues, the works become increasingly more esoteric, straying further from traditional harmony and therefore more deliberately avant-garde.

Todros Ben Judah HaLevi Abulafia (1247-c.1295) was born in Toledo, Spain and spent most of his life there. He was a prominent poet for the court of Alfonso X of Castile and later, Sancho IV. Abulafia wrote extensively. His *Gan HaMeshalim V'hachidot* [Garden of Apologues and Saws] contains over one thousand poems. He is noted for writing candidly about himself in his poems. His work is also significant because he incorporates historical matter into his poetry.⁴⁹

⁴⁹*Encyclopedia Judaica*, 1971 ed., s.v. "Abulafia, Todros Ben Juda Ha-Levi."

Et Echezeh - Immanuel Francis

I love Chana
 I love Naomi
 I cannot make up my mind
 I cannot run away from you - Love!
 Like iron rubbing against iron
 desire or sharpened two-fold.
 Please, love, I beg of you,
 give me two hearts, or else cut my heart two!

Aloni sets this poem by Immanuel Francis in two parts: the first six lines and the last two lines of the poem. The syncopated rhythm of the first section repeats consistently throughout while the voice enters and exits on weak beats. The roller coaster ride of being in love with two people at the same time is reflected in the split time signature, $3/4 + 3/8$. Sounding almost like a carousel, the accompaniment continues to alternate between these two times and splits up each measure of the first section. The second, more pleading section, consists of both the melody and accompaniment. The accompaniment is set with repeating block chords which sound like a slowing heartbeat. Aloni takes the urgency of the text in the poem and sets it in a relatively calm way.

The avant-garde compositional style used in these four pieces increases throughout them, the third work makes uses of syncopation in the accompaniment combined with a difficult and somewhat disjointed melody. The fourth and last in the cycle similarly uses syncopation, but the esoteric nature of the melody is less than the third. The general feeling of the work, however, because of the dual loves of the person in the poem, is of two facets. This duality, while the melody is less complex, makes the urgency of the text clear to the listener and the work ends abruptly without resolution. Similar to the poem,

this composition is incomplete. The reader never knows what happens to the man in love with Naomi and Chana. Likewise, the music gives Chana and Naomi their own rhythmic pattern (as heard throughout the first section of the piece) and ends clearly with the tension of the last line of the poem.

Immanuel Ben David ^{Francis} (1618-1703) wrote a treatise on Hebrew prosody, *Metek Sefatayim*. In this significant work, Francis includes a number of his poems. Immanuel and his brother received acclaim as poets, publishing many "occasional poems" together. In addition to his prosody, he was schooled in rabbinics by his father and brother and considered a rabbinical scholar.⁵⁰

⁵⁰*The Jewish Encyclopedia*, n.d., s.v. "Francis, Immanuel Ben David."

**CHAPTER THREE – ANALYSIS OF S'FATAI TIFTACH:
A cappella Pieces for Three and Four Part Chorus of Mixed Voices & Soli**

Introduction

S'fatai Tiftach [Open Thou My Lips]⁵¹, represents a compositional style of Aloni that is best described as fusion. Aloni fuses together two genres to create a certain style. In this collection, he combines Renaissance madrigal music with jazz harmonies. There are distinct dissonances, both jazz and Renaissance, complex *a cappella* key changes and marked tempo changes. Characteristic of the Renaissance madrigal style, these works are all *a cappella*. And characteristic of the jazz style, there are jazz modulations and accidentals throughout the collection. Because the entire collection is composed in this fused style, specific aspects of Aloni's settings can be explored more in depth, particularly his attention to text and mood.

These works, although they are composed in the same style, *sound* very different. This collection highlights a particular compositional talent of Aloni: the ability to stylize his settings in a particular mood while remaining consistent with a certain compositional genre. In *S'fatai Tiftach*, Aloni demonstrates this talent by calling upon a variety of texts from different parts of the *Shabbat* service, and one setting from Jewish funeral liturgy.

⁵¹Aminadav Aloni, *S'fatai Tiftach (Open Thou My Lips): A cappella pieces for three and four part chorus of mixed voices & soli* (Laguna Beach, Calif.: Eriel Music Ltd., 1993)

Adonai S'fatai Tiftach

O Lord, open my lips and my mouth shall declare Your praise.

The text, from psalm 51:17, was placed at the beginning of the *Amidah* by Rabbi Yochanan in the third century. The reason R. Yochanan inserted it is not clear; in fact, in the Middle Ages other biblical texts were inserted by other rabbis and later moved to other parts of the liturgy. Clearly, the Rabbis saw the importance of the *Amidah* and the importance of reciting it in the proper manner.⁵² This anticipatory text can best be described as the individual Jew's personal preparation before reciting the centerpiece of Jewish worship, the *Amidah*.

Adonai S'fatai Tiftach [God open my lips] is scored for one solo and three part choir, SAB. Its *largo* tempo marking and measures of tied notes give this piece a mysterious feel. The chord clusters regularly contain dissonant harmonies such as the half-step interval held for three measures between the altos and basses. These dissonances give the piece a distinctly modern sound. Aloni strays away from traditional diatonic harmony rules. He creates perpetual sound, blurring the beat and creating a controlled cacophony.

The feeling of constant and never-ending praise of God is created in this setting by the dissonant harmonies which do not resolve. Aloni gives no clear indication of down-beat and slows the tempo at the end of the piece with *fermata* and *diminuendo*.

⁵²Ismar Elbogen, *Jewish Liturgy: A Comprehensive History*, trans. Raymond P. Scheindlin, (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1993), 38.

V'shamru

The children of Israel shall keep the Sabbath and observe it throughout their generations as everlasting covenant. It is a sign between Me and the children of Israel forever; for in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and rested.⁵³

V'shamru, for SAB choir creates a feeling of openness in open spaced harmonies.

The open chords are expanded further by an echo technique used in the text. The echo of the opening words by the basses occurs at a slower speed than those sung by the trebles.

The male voices sing the text "*V'shamru b'nei yisrael*" in the same four measures that the female voices sing, "*V'shamru b'nei yisrael, v'shamru et hashabbat.*" This fast versus slow exposition of the first line of text eludes to the different ways Jews "guard" the Shabbat, and the different ways people celebrate Shabbat.

For a complete analysis of this setting of *V'shamru*, refer to Chapter Four and Appendix A.

Havu Ladonai

Render unto God, you sons of the powerful; render unto God, honor and might. Render unto God honor worthy of His name; prostrate yourselves before God in his intensely holy place. The voice of God is upon the waters, the God of glory thunders, God is upon vast waters. The voice of God is in power! The voice of God is in majesty! The voice of God that breaks the cedars, God shatters the cedars of Lebanon! He makes them prance about like a calf; Lebanon and Syria like [young oxen.] The voice of God cleaves with shafts of fire. The voice of God convulses the wilderness; God convulses the wilderness of Kadesh. The voice of God frightens the Hines, and strips the forests bare; while in His Temple all proclaim, 'Glory!' God sat enthroned at the deluge; God sits enthroned as King forever. God will give might to His people, God will bless His people with

⁵³Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur: Weekday/Sabbath/Festival*, (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1990), 336.

peace.⁵⁴

The text in *Havu Ladonai* is taken from psalm 29 and is found in the traditional liturgy⁵⁵ of *Kabbalat Shabbat* immediately before the recitation of *Ana b'koach* [We beg you], the prayer containing the forty-two initials of the secret name of God. *Havu Ladonai* is said to have certain Kabbalistic allusions. The Kabbalist Arizal writes that when this psalm is recited with intense devotion and concentration, it effects important spiritual goodness in the divine heavenly realms.⁵⁶

This is the first piece in *Adonai S'fatai Tiftach* to begin in a strictly fast tempo. The intricate rhythms and syncopation create surprising entrances. Contrasting the frenetic syncopation are held chords and consonant, classical resolutions. The piece is in ABA' form; the more contemplative, slower B section beginning at measure 61 returns in measure 72 to an abbreviated A' section. The frequent meter changes and quick tempo push the beat constantly in the A section until the B section settles the hysteria, only for it to return in the amended repetition of section A.

Aloni uses two musical devices in this work extensively: jazz harmonizations and syncopation. The tempo marking of "*vivo*" and Aloni's syncopated rhythms bring joy,

⁵⁴Ibid., 315.

⁵⁵Traditional liturgy examples are used in this example for two reasons: (1) the Reform liturgy omits or moves rubrics for ideological reasons that are used for placing particular texts into context; (2) Aloni was employed and wrote much of his music for a synagogue affiliated with the Conservative movement of Judaism.

⁵⁶Scherman, *Art Scroll Siddur*, 314. Arizal and other commentators cite that while this psalm as well as other aspects of the Kabbalistic tradition should be studied only by "qualified persons," that all should recite this psalm "with great joy and with as much understanding as they can muster."

fervor and a sense of urgency to this text. The strength and power of God are explicit in the metaphors of the text. This musical setting uses musical metaphor to express the greatness of God that the psalm text exclaims.

N'shamah T'horah

My God, the soul You placed within me is pure. You created it, You fashioned it, You breathed it into me, You safeguard it within me, and eventually You will take it from me, and restore it to me in the time to come. As long as the soul is within me, I gratefully thank you God, my God and the God of my forefathers, Master of all works, Lord of all souls. Blessed are You, God, who restores souls to dead bodies.⁵⁷

N'shamah T'horah, from the Shabbat morning liturgy is found in the morning blessings of Shabbat, festival and weekday services. This setting is plaintive, generally homophonic. The voice leading has many Renaissance madrigal qualities. The work is scored for two treble sections (soprano and alto) and men, presumably both tenors and basses. The score specifies "tenor" in selected sections. In omitting the basses for the majority of the work, Aloni is using the higher resonances of the treble voices to further expand this Renaissance feel. The *tessitura* is high in the soprano range, providing a unique "loftiness" to the ensemble.

In the recordings of this work in which Aloni conducted, his tempi are indicative of the *rubato* and *ritardando* commonly found in Renaissance and medieval religious music.⁵⁸

⁵⁷Ibid., 19.

⁵⁸See recording: "*The Synagogue Choral Music of Aminadav Aloni*," conducted by Aminadav Aloni; recorded by the Valley Chamber Singers recording (Jewish Music Commission of Los Angeles, 1999), tracks 26-38.

In the “*poco animato*” section (mm.30-43). Aloni uses eighth-note rests, *staccati* and a fast section in $\frac{5}{8}$ with sixteenths to accentuate the drama of the text: “*Kol z'man, kol z'man shehan'shamah b'kirbi, modeh ani l'fanecha, Adonai elohai velohai avotai. Ribon kol hama'asim, adon kol han'shamot.*” [As long as the soul is within me, I gratefully thank you, God, my God and the God of my forefathers, Master of all works, Lord of all souls.] By never exceeding the *mezzo piano* dynamic, Aloni highlights the individuality and personal aspect of this first person text. In the recording, the crescendi and decrescendi are easily heard, but never exceed *mezzopiano*.

Ahavat Olam

With the eternal love have You loved the House of Israel, Your nation. Torah and commandments, decrees and ordinances have You taught us. Therefore God, our God, upon our retiring and arising, we will discuss Your decrees and will rejoice with the words of Your Torah and with Your commandments for all eternity. For they are our life and the length of our days and about them we will meditate day and night. May you not remove Your love from us forever. Blessed are You, God, who loves His nation Israel.⁵⁹

*Ahavat Olam*⁶⁰ immediately precedes the recitation of the *Sh'ma* as a part of the *Sh'ma u'virchoteha* [*Sh'ma* and her blessings) in the *Erev Shabbat* liturgy.⁶¹

⁵⁹Scherman, *Art Scroll Siddur*, 259.

⁶⁰This setting of *Ahavat Olam* is not to be confused with Aloni's other setting with the same name appropriate for High Holy Days. The High Holy Day setting of *Ahavat Olam* is discussed in depth in chapter four.

⁶¹*Ahavat Olam* is also a part of the daily evening liturgy, but for the purpose of understanding Aloni's music in the context of a service, his synagogue music was used mostly in the *Erev Shabbat* and *Shabbat* liturgies. It is noteworthy that no indication is given for which particular service this setting was written for, *Shabbat* or the weekday.

Scored for SATB choir and soprano, alto and tenor soli, Aloni's *Ahavat Olam* is in ABA'CA¹¹ form. The A section begins with a four measure mini-fugue pattern that is repeated in variations twice more during the work. This setting has a more modern sound than *N'shamah T'horah*, dissonances are common and cadences are atypical of the rules of diatonic tonal harmony.

The text expresses the theme of God's revealing of Torah through God's love for us. Aloni uses *ritard* to give certain words particular import. For example, the first section has a large *ritard* in measure five on the text, "*amcha ahavta*," [Your [God's] people You have loved]. Again this device is used in measures 16-18 just before the first part of the piece is repeated.

The text goes from "*Torah u'mitzvot chukim umishpatim, otanu limad'ta*," [Torah and commandments, decrees and ordinances You have taught us] back to "*Ahavat Olam, beit Yisrael, amcha ahavta*." [With an eternal love You have loved the House of Israel, Your nation.] The return to this text symbolizes the love of Torah that we must first embody, before we can accept it. Our acceptance of Torah is based on the love that God has for us and the love that we, in turn, have for God.

Commentary on this prayer sheds light on this setting. "Only after acknowledging our dependence on, and love for the Torah, can we go on to express our undivided loyalty and dedication to God [in the *Sh'ma*]."⁶² This sentiment cannot be overlooked in the composition because Aloni repeats the text: "*Ahavat Olam beit Yisrael amcha ahavta*" more than five times in the setting, always coming back to it after exposing another level

⁶²Scherman, 259.

of the liturgical text.

Rabbi Shim'on

Rabbi Shim'on, the son of Elazar, said: Do not pacify your fellow in the hour of his anger; do not comfort him while his dead lies before him; do not question him at the time he makes a vow; and do not try to see him in the hour of his disgrace.⁶³

Rabbi Shim'on falls into the same playful genre as *Havu Ladonai*. Aloni makes this playfulness evident in the exciting rhythmic patterns while repeating the text, "*Rabbi Shim'on ben Elazar omer*," [Rabbi Shim'on son of Elazar, said...]. Furthermore, the jovial feeling of the piece comes from the syncopated choral entrances in which the bass line enters one full beat before the rest of the choir. This initial syncopation theme continues throughout the work.

The piece is in ABA form. The A section consists of two repeated sections and the B section consisting of two differing sections. The key does not change from D minor, contrary to the key changes in *Ahavat Olam*.

The compositional device used most in this piece is syncopation. Aloni uses two methods to achieve the level of syncopation and rhythmic bounce in this piece. First, he employs frequent time signature changes. The pattern of time changes in the refrain is a one beat reduction in three consecutive measures: 4/4 → 3/4 → 2/4 | 4/4 → 3/4 → 2/4 and so on. One meter is never sustained. Second, the notes tied over the bar further blur the feeling of consistent meter, especially as the time signature changes when a note is held

⁶³Aminadav Aloni, *S'fatai Tiftach: A cappella pieces for three and four part chorus of mixed voices & soli*, (Laguna Beach, CA: EML Records, 1994), compact disc recording liner notes.

over. In measure 6, for example, the time signature changes to 3/4, but all four parts have two tied eighth notes, one on either side of the time signature change.

The translation of the text from *Pirkei Avot* 4:23 [Ethics of the Fathers] gives some insight to this distinct musical treatment. This text is not a liturgical text taken from the prayer book, but a teaching. While maintaining the quasi avant garde compositional style common to this entire collection, Aloni treats these words with a different sense of purpose than most of the liturgical texts in the collection. Rather than an expression of prayer, Aloni expresses the words of *Rabbi Shim'on* as they really are, a series of lessons.

One correlation between the text and this setting is Aloni's interpretation of the text's innate logic of how to behave towards others. These simple instructions in interpersonal skills: not calming a person who is angry, not comforting someone at a time of tragedy, or questioning someone's vow are important because of the often extenuating circumstances about which a bystander may be completely unaware. Aloni could be trying to show how simple these ideas are by repeating text and setting the voice in a *parlando* style. While simple, they require careful consideration before acting. It is all too easy for one to behave to the contrary.

In this simple text that has deep meaning with syncopated rhythms, the text takes on a different shape. It is no longer predictable. Words are emphasized and de-emphasized to promote a deeper reading of the text. In section A, "*ben Elazar*," the syllable "*El*" is elongated with two tied eighth notes. This is contrary to spoken Hebrew, which stresses the last syllable of the word, "*El-a-ZAR*." Additionally, in section B, measure 42 and 46, the word "*v'al*" [and do not] is accented with two quarter notes,

making the command “do not” stand out. While adding to the playfulness of the piece, the significance of this emphasis makes evident to the listener the deeper textual meaning.

Using music as his chalkboard, this setting attempts to teach the true meaning of a text.

The text is simple on first glance, but contains complex character virtues Judaism deems important.

Magein Avot

He who was the shield of our forefathers with His word, who resuscitates the dead with His utterance, the Holy God who is unequalled, who grants rest to his people on His holy Sabbath day, for He was pleased with them to grant them rest.⁶⁴

Using classical diatonic harmonies, *Magein Avot* is classified in that same Renaissance/ medieval genre of music as *N'shamah T'horah*. The first phrase, “*Magein Avot bid'varo m'chayeh metim b'ma'amaro*,” [With His [God's] words He [God] shields our fathers] is repeated at the end of the piece in the similar ABA' form as *V'shamru* and *Havu Ladonai*. Also similar to *V'shamru*, each of the three choral parts changes syllables at different times, giving this piece a feeling of a more contemplative, personal prayer.

The *Magein Avot* prayer follows the recitation of the *Amidah* and is part of the *M'ein Sheva* section of the *Erev Shabbat* liturgy. Aloni wrote this setting for a Conservative venue, as the text “*m'chayeh metim*,” [resuscitates or resurrects the dead], has been changed in the Reform prayerbook. To give the piece a free feeling without strong beats or measures, Aloni selects 6/8 and 9/8 combined with the *parlando* and a

⁶⁴Scherman, p. 347.

limited number of syncopations.⁶⁵

Kol Yisrael

All of Israel has a share in the world to come along with all the righteous people of the world.

The first work to combine the use of Hebrew and English, "*Kol Yisrael Yeish Lehem Chelek*," [all of Israel has a share in the world to come] is from the introduction to *Pirkei Avot*. Aloni's setting gives the text the animation that it deserves by beginning simply with only the sopranos and adding the other two parts as the complexity of the melody increases.

The English section (mm. 31-52) marked *piu mosso* begins *forte*, the first time in this piece this dynamic is used. Rather than having the text sung by different sections at different times, as in the Hebrew section of this piece (and evidenced in *V'shamru* and others), Aloni sets the English with all voices singing the same text simultaneously. While the tempo is faster (*piu mosso* from *moderato*), the unified pronunciation of the English ensures text is easily distinguishable. The English section is given increased musical importance in part because of its high tessitura for both the men and the soprano sections. Again, as seen in numerous pieces in *S'fatai Tiftach*, this setting is in ABA'.

This piece, like *Rabbi Shim'on*, is not a liturgical setting, but rather a teaching. Juxtaposed to *Rabbi Shim'on*, the tempo is a little more subdued, the text more easily heard because its homophonic setting. Extensive syncopation is not used in this setting,

⁶⁵Refers to setting unaccented Hebrew syllables to not fall on a strong beat. Conversely, occasionally the opposite is true, (refer to mm. 7 & 23 for examples).

rather, Aloni capitalizes on the fluidity of the melodic line.

Mah Adam

What is man that God should notice him? The son of man that God should consider him? Man is like a breath; his days like a passing shadow.

This setting of psalm 144:3-4 is the only setting in this collection from the liturgy of the *Yom Kippur Yizkor* service.

Aloni's setting displays the sense of mystery of the text. The text describes man's mortality and that life is "like a passing shadow," enhancing the fleeting days of life all of us have using repetition combined with *diminuendo*.

Mah Adam returns to the esoteric style with modern harmonies and distinct dissonances. English and Hebrew are again used, only here they are combined rather than separated by sections, as in *Kol Yisrael*. Additionally, in *Mah Adam* the parts move to different syllables at different times, obscuring the text and giving the piece a feeling of freedom. For example, while the treble voices are singing "*Mah adam vateda'eihu ben enosh vat'chashveihu, God who created us...*" [What is man that God should notice him? The son of man that God should consider him?] (mm. 1-5), the male voices sing only, "*mah adam ben enosh, we are us...*" [What is man that God should notice him?] The Hebrew and English are combined seamlessly to ensure that the listener understands the words. The dissonant harmonies are very subtly resolved, if at all, to further convey mystery, awe and humankind's mortality.

Shiviti

I have set the Lord always before me; He is my right hand, I shall not fail.
Therefore my heart and soul rejoice, my flesh will also dwell in safety.⁶⁶

The SAB plus solo setting of *Shiviti* is the best example in this collection of Aloni's mastery of Jazz and classical harmonies. He uses them together with fantastic result. From the funeral service, the *Shiviti* text holds significant meaning for many, especially at times of loss and grief. Aloni sets this work simply using rhythm in a fluid, free-flowing way. Although there are many meter changes and jazz-style harmonies, the overall effect of this musical work echoes the notion in the text of eternal peace.

Only twenty measures long, Aloni writes the piece with strict and steady beats and measures. However, when recorded with the composer conducting the professional choir, all feeling of a steady and strict tempo is given over to the majesty of the harmonies and the subtle *crescendi* and *decrescendi* of the choir, illustrating a much freer adherence to tempo.

The solo line comes directly out of the choir and is seamlessly integrated to sound more like an additional choir line than a solo. Aloni's writing of the line creates that integration by keeping the line light, melodically consonant and at the same dynamic level as the choir.

This work is a *cappella* SAB and exemplifies the text of eternal peace in the following way. An analysis of the music shows virtually no exposition section, only the continued development of the quiet, contemplative execution of the psalm text. Musically

⁶⁶Aloni, compact disc liner notes.

speaking, the exposition section of any piece is designed to give the listener the "theme" of the work. The development section then takes that theme to another level. In liturgical terms, the exposition "meets the congregation where they are," and the development "takes them to a heightened sense of emotional awareness." This work, in the context of a funeral, recognizes that the listener (the mourner) is already at a level of greater emotional awareness, and therefore does not need further emotional development, only the expression of the theme.

Kaddish Yatom

Magnified and sanctified be the name of God throughout the world which He hath created according to his will. May He establish His kingdom during the days of life. Speedily, soon, and we say: Amen. May His great name be blessed forever and ever. Exalted and honored by the name of the Holy One, blessed be He, whose glory transcends, is beyond all praises, hymns and blessings that man renders unto Him; and we say: Amen. May there be abundant peace from heaven, and life for us and for all of Israel; and we say: Amen. May He who establishes peace in the heavens, grant peace unto us and unto Israel; and we say: Amen.

If Aloni's setting of *Shiviti* is an example of simple, textually-based music, his setting of *Kaddish* is the opposite. Still in the genre of a *cappella* choral writing for SATB, this piece is exceptionally challenging for the singer and the listener respectively.

First, for the singer, the jazz harmonies create dissonances that require masterful tuning. Like *Shiviti* and other pieces in this collection, the writing adheres strictly to rhythm and meter, yet the performance requires fluid and free singing. Combined with the harmonies, a warm sound that is both dissonant and consonant is created. In terms of preparation and performance, skilled and talented singers are needed to create that warmth

and free movement in an organized way.

Second, for the listener, the *Kaddish Yatom*, or Mourner's Kaddish, is traditionally read. Because this text is rarely set as a musical composition, it is difficult for the listener to understand it within a liturgical context. Therefore, I will set aside the liturgical context of the *Kaddish* and analyze this work musically. *Kaddish Yatom* demonstrates Aloni's mature jazz compositional style and his ability to "fuse" his jazz harmonies with fluid chant as in a medieval Renaissance style.⁶⁷

The rhythms are complex, with the time signature switching between 2/4, 3/4 and 4/4 in order to properly accommodate the textual accentuations. As is evident in other pieces in this collection, Aloni gives the text profound meaning through his musical settings. The solemn, rich harmonies combine with the fluid setting of the text-based rhythm. The work comes to a climax, and then quickly falls at the text "*yitaleh v'yithalal sh'mei d'kudsha*" [Praised and lauded by the Holy One, Blessed is He.] Aloni's setting glorifies this prayer in a mystical way, using contemporary harmony and indulging in harmonic dissonance.

Hatov

You who art good, whose mercies never fail us, compassionate one, whose loving kindnesses never cease, we ever hope in Thee. We gratefully acknowledge You, Lord our God, our fathers' God, to all eternity. You are our rock and our saving shield. In every generation, we give You thanks and praise for our lives which are in Your keeping, and our souls which in Your care, for Your miracles which are

⁶⁷The term "fuse" is used interchangeably with the term "fusion" and refers the combination of two opposed or at least separate styles of music.

daily with us and for Your wonders and favors.⁶⁸

This text is found in the *Modim* section of the *Amidah* for both *Shabbat* and weekdays. The setting is arranged for SAB and two solos.

The majesty of the text is reflected in this work in two distinct sections: the sprightly *Hatov* text and the more subdued, reflective *Modim* text.⁶⁹ Expressing our uncontrollable appreciation for God's compassion and kindness toward us, Aloni starts the work in a chaotic, dissonant outburst of "*Hatov, ki lo chalu rachamecha v'racheim ki lo tamu chasadecha meolam*" [The Beneficent One, for Your compassions were never exhausted, and Compassionate One, for your kindnesses never ended—always have we put our trust in You.]⁷⁰ The *modim* section is less frantic with the tempo marking *meno mosso*. Here, the music seems to take that chaos of thanks in the first section and transform it into majestic thanks. The *hatov* section recurs and is followed by the final *modim* section with an added solo line. In the solo line of the last *modim* section, the melody descends during "*modim anachnu lach*," [we gratefully thank You] indicating the traditional bow of the worshipper as this text is rendered. The text becomes full and

⁶⁸Aloni, compact disc liner notes (modified). The loose translation above can be compared to one below, from the traditional *Art Scroll Siddur* which is found in parenthesis.

⁶⁹The work begins with *Hatov* and is followed by *Modim*—out of liturgical order. First recognizing God's compassion and kindness followed by "gratefully thanking God" is Aloni's effective poetic commentary on this text: one must first have something to be thankful for (compassion and kindness) and then express that thanks (we gratefully thank You).

⁷⁰Translation in parenthesis in this example: Scherman, 426.

majestic in this last section “*she 'ata hu Adonai eloheinu, she 'ata hu elohei avoteinu l'olam va'ed*” [for it is You Who are Adonai, our God and the God of our forefathers for all eternity]. The work ends peacefully with a subtle 4-5 suspension, giving the piece a consonant and sublime final cadence.

V'ahavta L'rei'acha

And thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

Three words from Leviticus 19:18 are the only words in Aloni's setting of *V'ahavta l'rei'acha Kamocha* [love your neighbor as yourself]. Aloni uses first the Hebrew and then the English of this line, giving this work multi-denominational significance, across Judeo-Christian lines and beyond. Different tempi of the text reflect different moods. Different ranges of the voices reflect different individual understandings of this text.

This work deserves attention in two areas: its singability and the eclectic compositional style. One might not leave a performance of this work humming or whistling the beautiful melodies found therein. The writing is complex, using many accidentals and momentary key changes. Aloni never settles on one tonality in this piece, making it somewhat tiresome to listen to and challenging to sing.

As is evident in his Jewish music collection, Aloni was capable of composing in many different styles. The style of this particular collection (and this work) is in an eclectic style, one that elevates the importance of the text while maintaining a high level of compositional technique. Aloni accomplishes a critical goal of setting the work eclectically while representing the meaning of the text. This piece takes the listener on a

journey through the texts—how they effect him, through his eyes, and how they effect prayer.

In terms of the *S'fatai Tiftach* collection, this piece sets the shortest line of text. It is also, arguably, the most avant-garde of the collection. Aloni delivers the text in both Hebrew and English, showing its meaning to all people. The simplicity of the words juxtaposed to the complexity of the harmonies in this work can be seen as Aloni's commentary on neighborly love: knowing that we are "supposed" to love our neighbor is easily understood, while practicing it is more difficult.

The collection is recorded on a compact disc with the same title, also from Eriel. Almost immediately after his death in 1999, another recording was issued, "The Synagogue Choral Music of Aminadav Aloni" containing *S'fatai Tiftach* in addition to his *Hallel* and *Torah Services* and published under the auspices of the Jewish Music Commission and produced by Jewish music composer and conductor, Dr. Michael Isaacson.

CHAPTER FOUR – FULL MUSICAL ANALYSIS

The previous chapter contains somewhat brief annotations of several of Aloni's settings of Jewish music. The goal of those analyses is to offer a general sense of his compositions, and to inspire the reader to look more closely at his works. This chapter looks more closely at two of Aloni's compositions. Particular attention is paid to Aloni's treatment of text, melody, rhythm and harmonic movement.

The two pieces analyzed are *V'shamru* from *S'fatai Tiftach* and the High Holy Day setting of *Ahavat Olam*. The musical scores and charts summarizing the contour of each can be found in Appendices A and B.

V'shamru from *S'fatai Tiftach*

The *V'shamru* text is a quotation from Exodus 31:16-17 and is found in *Ma'ariv l'Shabbat* directly after *Hashkivenu* and immediately before the recitation of *Chatsi Kaddish* and the *Shemoneh Esrei*.

(16) The Israelite people shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time: (17) It shall be a sign for all time between Me and the people of Israel. For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed.⁷¹

This setting of *V'shamru* is in ABA' form. Textually, section A is verse 16 and section B is verse 17. The piece ends with the repetition of the melody of v. 16 used to begin the piece. After two measures of cadential material, the final cadence lacks the fifth of the chord, thus giving the piece an uncertain sense of finality.

⁷¹JPS Hebrew-English Tanakh: *The Traditional Hebrew Text and the New JPS Translation*, 2nd ed. (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 1999), 182-183.

Aloni has written this piece for a three voice choir: soprano, alto and bass. SAB voicing produces two effects on this piece. First, the chords are voiced in open spacing because the interval between the alto and bass is usually larger than an octave. The bass line contains no notes above E \flat thus producing open spaced chords and gives the work somewhat of an unbalanced sound. Second, the use of the seventh chord is more difficult when writing for three voices because it requires the omission of one note of the triad. Where seventh chords are used, Aloni follows the standard practice rules of harmonic progression and usually omits the 5th of the chord.

The organization of this piece is simple. Section A (Exodus 31: 16, see above) is built using three phrases. The first two phrases consist of two measures each and the third consists of four measures, 2+2+4. Section B (Exodus 31:17) uses the same structure, with one additional phrase of four bars, 2+2+4+4.

Section A begins in c minor with a tonic triad and continues to measure four with a succession on i incorporating the iv and minor v chords, yet remains around the i chord. At the end of measure four continuing through to the middle of measure seven, Aloni focuses the tonality around the relative major key of E \flat . Measures five through seven can be heard clearly in E \flat .

Because the c minor and E \flat Major are so closely related tonally, it is often difficult to differentiate between modulations and momentary "lapses" in the relative key. One way to differentiate between the two is to locate a cadential point and work backwards. Because there are no accidentals needed when modulating to the relative key, I have identified points in which the tonality of the piece suggests a modulation.

The modulation in the *V'shamru* is not significant in this piece. On the most general level, this piece can be viewed as being wholly in c minor with one distinct E \flat Major section (as described above) and two other points, both in section B, which suggest E \flat Major but lack sufficient development to be considered a modulation.

The three main cadential points in *V'shamru* are at the end of each section (see chart). The cadence at the end of the repeated A section is significantly obscured by the preceding progression in E \flat Major. If measures four through eight were analyzed in E \flat Major, the resulting cadence would be ii-III, hardly a stopping point in E \flat . However, when measure seven and eight are re-analyzed according to c minor, the half cadence iv-v is clear. (The second ending in measure nine is identical to the first ending with only an extra beat added for section B to begin.) This cadence, which ends section A is not, however, a strong musical ending for the simple reason that the text continues on immediately afterward: "... a covenant for all time. . . . between Me and the people of Israel."

Aloni voices the dominant chord (v) in measure eight with the fifth scale degree in the bass and doubles it in the soprano. The alto articulates an uncommon 4-5 suspension. There is no third in the chord to delineate major or minor. Obviously, there is little evidence to call this chord a dominant, or to label this moment in the piece a cadence. It is important to notice that the key of c minor, the very key in which Aloni is forming this half cadence, has been obscured by a detour in E \flat Major for at least the preceding two measures.

Measures 20-21 again offer questionable cadential material, this time most

definitely, in c minor. The structure is iv to v with no third. Further, he leaves the chord "incomplete" with an unresolved 4-3 suspension. Because of this weak cadence, the B section is left unresolved, perhaps in order to allow the surprise restatement of the A section.

The concluding cadence at the end of the restatement of the A section (A') is of particular interest. The v7 to i authentic cadence in measures 35-36 is particularly weak for the end of a piece. The leading tone, B \sharp is not present, only a B \flat , which blurs the feeling of tonic resolution when it is resolved in upward motion to C. To blur the final cadence even more, Aloni includes a premature resolution to the tonic scale step before stating the tonic chord in the final measure.

There are two cadences of secondary import that are noteworthy. First, in the B section at the end of the first four bar phrase (m.23), Aloni makes use of the plagal cadence (iv₆-i). This cadence is overshadowed by the continuing succession on the tonic chord that began in measure 23. The voicing of the chord, in the first inversion, further blurs the plagal feeling. Second, in measure 26, Aloni uses the III of c minor to create an authentic cadential detour in the key of E \flat Major. The key of the section is c minor, but the use of the V/III going to III suggests a V-I cadence in E \flat Major. No modulation occurs, he simply incorporates an E \flat Major V-I cadence in the middle of a c minor section.

Now that specific musical elements have been discussed, it is now possible to move to the general musical and textual treatment of the piece. The way Aloni sets the text is particularly interesting in the following areas. The text of the bass line in the A

section moves slower than the upper two voices through the opening verse of the piece. Musically, the different speed of textual exposition balances the fast moving treble line with the slower, longer notes in the bass line. Additionally, the two speeds create a perpetual feeling: the continuation of keeping of Shabbat. Section A serves two purposes in exposing the Exodus text. First, the duty of keeping this Shabbat is demonstrated by the quick exposition in the treble line, creating the rushed feeling felt in many Jewish homes prior to *Shabbat*. Second, the commandment of keeping the *Shabbat* through the ages is heard in the slower, more deliberate exposition of the text in the bass line. Therefore, the perpetual keeping of *Shabbat*, each person and each generation is written into both sections of the piece.

Aloni uses symbolism again in the text in measures five and six, with the word "*la'asot*," to do or to make. The basses and sopranos sing "*la'asot*" one beat before the altos, creating the image that the tradition of *Shabbat* is "made" differently for each person and that one must personally "make" *Shabbat* rather than having it "made for them."

The eighth note rest in measure 23 between "*hashamayim* and "*v'et ha'aretz*" creates a distinct break between God's two creations, the heavens and the earth. Of the number of different ways this symbolism can be read, I look at this section as if Aloni is making sure that we,(humanity) realize that only God created the heavens, but we have a role in the future creation of God's other creation, the earth.

Measures 24-27 deserve attention for two reasons. First, Aloni repeats the text "*uvayom hash'vi'i*," and on the seventh day. The repetition of text is important to the musician, as it requires two different "feelings" on the same words. Some composers

repeat words because they have multiple, underlying meanings to passages; others do so to emphasize the singular meaning of a particular phrase; while other repetitions cannot be explained beyond the fact that they allow for a tapering with repeated text that brings a musical section to a natural end. In this case, the second explanation seems to be most true: to emphasize the singular meaning of a particular phrase. However, it is not that simple. I hear the first phrase acting as the quote from Exodus, God has arrived at the seventh day. The second phrase, in ascending motion, represents the people of Israel, the congregation, reaching the seventh day. Just as God reached the seventh day of creation, we reach the seventh day of our week of creation every *Erev Shabbat*. Like God, we need the opportunity to rest, the very commandment of this line in Exodus.

Second, the unresolved suspension at the end of the B section seems contradictory to the literal meaning of "*vayinafash*," and [God] was refreshed. The unresolved suspension in measure 28 seems out of place. "And [God] was refreshed" seems like the logical place to put a consonant harmony, or at least a dissonant harmony with a consonant resolution. In this case, Aloni leaves the dissonant D and C against each other in the soprano and alto lines.

Aloni's lecture notes from talks he gave as composer-in-residence at VBS indicate that he was aware of the problems facing Jews in today's society. I speculate that Aloni created this unresolved resolution to represent the incomplete refreshment that *Shabbat* gives us. From the traditional Jewish standpoint, the *Shabbat* of all *Shabbatot* will be the coming of the Messiah, when all Jews observe and keep all of God's commandments. Until then, we must remain content with an incomplete world, therefore an incomplete

chord. A modern interpretation is that we as Jews have a substantial amount of work to do in order to have a satisfactory world. There is pain, suffering and hunger. Aloni is reminding us here that in addition to God and the Jewish people seeking rest and refreshment on *Shabbat*, there is work to be done when *Shabbat* ends, the work of *tikkun olam* [repairing the world].

Aloni's *V'shamru* is not a compositional masterpiece, it represents one setting from his *S'fatai Tiftach* collection. The harmonies are not particularly strong nor is the setting destined to become a standard for this section of liturgy. However, the composition has several significant musical moments that emphasize the *midrash* and underlying meanings of the text.

Ahavat Olam

Aminadav Aloni set the *Ahavat Olam* for High Holy Days incorporating English and Hebrew, two choirs, one four part choir and one two part choir for optional children's choir cantor and organ accompaniment. The piece includes use of High Holy Day *musach* themes in accompanying vocal and organ lines as well as in the cantor's solo line. The work was first published by Transcontinental Music Publications in 1984 and was re-published in their High Holy Day anthology, *Yamim Noraim, Volume One for Rosh Hashanah*.⁷²

The text *Ahavat Olam* immediately precedes the recitation of the *Sh'ma* as a part of the *Sh'ma u'virchoteha* [*Sh'ma* and her blessings] in the evening liturgy of *Rosh Hashanah*.⁷³ The English translation of the text follows:

Unending is Your love for Your people, the House of Israel: Torah and Mitzvot, laws and precepts have You taught us. Therefore, O God, when we lie down and when we rise up, we will meditate on Your laws and rejoice in Your Torah and Mitzvot for ever. Day and night we will reflect on them, for they are our life and the length of our days. O may Your love never depart from our hearts! Blessed are You, O God: You love Your people Israel.⁷⁴

For cantor choir and accompaniment, Aloni's setting makes use of High Holy Day

⁷²Samuel Adler, ed., *Yamim Noraim (Days of Awe): Cantor, Choir and Organ*, vol. 1., (New York: Transcontinental Music Publications, 1990), 61-68.

⁷³The *Ahavat Olam* prayer is found in the daily and *Shabbat* evening prayers as well. Because this setting is specifically for High Holy Days and contains High Holy Day *musach*, it is not appropriate to include it during regular services.

⁷⁴Chaim Stern, ed., *Gates of Repentance: The New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe*, New York: Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978, revised 1996, p. 55.

nusach and combines it with his original melody. Beginning with a simple melody, the work grows and eventually climaxes with a choral section, then tapers to a simple *chatimah*, the ending blessing of the *Ahavat Olam* prayer.

The setting can be broken down into six parts. Section A begins with the two part treble choir (optionally scored for two part children's choir) using a combination of Hebrew and English, similar to a phrase by phrase translation of the piece. The cantor embellishes, in Hebrew only, the melody of the choir. The A section is predominantly centered around C major with a few moments (mm.6-7, 10) which seem to shift to the relative minor, a, but without modulation. These momentary lapses into a minor are similar to the momentary shifts found in Aloni's *V'shamru*, and described in detail above. The cantor's embellishment in the second half of section A (mm. 13-23) is accompanied by unison choir singing on the "la." While the beginning melodic motives of the work seem angular, with large leaps and a somewhat sparse organ accompaniment, the following melody for the unison choir is taken directly from the traditional *nusach* of the High Holy Days. Later in the work, Aloni will alter slightly the *nusach* for melodic effect, but here, the melody is quoted strictly. It is easy to miss, however, because the dynamic marking indicated is piano while the cantor is simultaneously singing a contrasting line marked mezzo-piano. Together with the organ accompaniment these two lines create harmonies that function classically, while cleverly preserving the traditional *nusach*.

Section B is written for cantor and sparse organ accompaniment in the key of C major. Aloni utilizes classical harmony in the accompaniment to complete this section, but he inserts an "a minor lapse" at the very end (m.32) to make a smooth transition into the

next section.⁷⁵ The textual allusions are especially interesting in this section. Aloni repeats the word “*otanu*” [between us] in contrasting ascending and descending patterns, suggesting that the Torah and *mitzvot* that God has taught us are more than just teachings. They are our connection to God. By ascending and descending the scale, Aloni creates the illusion of a ladder, the ladder which connects the Jewish people to God, and God to the Jewish people. It is this “ladder,” made of Torah and *mitzvot*, that is our eternal connection to God. *The Art Scroll Siddur* offers that *Ahavat Olam* is “an ecstatic expression of gratitude for the gift of Torah.” It is our expression of that love that allows us to continue [in prayer] toward “undivided loyalty and dedication to [God].”⁷⁶

Section C is again predominantly in C major, but in this case Aloni fully modulates to the relative a minor. The distinct texture change from cantor and accompaniment only to homophonic four-part choral writing is accentuated by the momentary lapse to a minor the concluding cadence of the B section (m. 32). The modulation to a minor occurs in measure 36 and the rest of section C continues in a minor. After modulating, Aloni solidifies the minor feeling with a Neapolitan chord followed immediately by a succession on the iv of a minor, d minor.

In section D, Aloni incorporates an echo texture in a minor between the male and female voices in measures 40-44. The text “*v'nismach b'divrei Toratecha*,” [and we will rejoice in the study of Torah,] is cited by *The Art Scroll Siddur* as a critical part of the

⁷⁵“Minor lapse” refers to the occasional shift to the relative minor key without the use of pivot chord or other musical signal that a brief change of key is about to occur.

⁷⁶Nosson Scherman, ed., *The Complete Art Scroll Siddur: Weekday/Sabbath Festival*, (Brooklyn: Mesorah Publications, 1990), 258.

commandment to study Torah: one must engage in its study not merely as a chore, but with a sense of joy.⁷⁷ The playful feeling of the call and response Aloni utilizes creates the feeling of happiness. Like tossing a ball back and forth, the choir is tossing back and forth the feeling of the commandment to study with a sense of happiness. The texture thickens as an ascending line is passed from the tenor to the bass line, (mm. 44-45). The “*I’olam va’ed*,” [forever] section (m. 48-53) returns to C Major. The text is repeated in different harmonic textures in a decrescendo, alternating between male and female voices, symbolizing the meaning of the text, “forever.”

Section E is a melodic reprise of the *musach* exposed first in the A section with the choir’s “la.” This time, the cantor chants in an altered High Holy Day *musach* the “*Ki heim chayeinu*” text. Altered *musach* refers to the use of the traditional melody in the beginning of the “*v’oreich yameinu*” phrase, but rather than finishing the phrase in *musach*, Aloni strays from it before the entire traditional melody is exposed. With a pedal tone on C, the section begins with minimal organ accompaniment which thickens in the transition to the tutti choir’s entrance in measure 61. The altered *musach* musically articulates the meaning of the text, “the length of our days,” by extending the length of the melody. Aloni uses the ascending pattern of the *musach* to carry the melody upward further in his own melody. This gives particular import to the words “*v’oreich yameinu*.” While predominately in C major, elements of a minor are incorporated into the cantor’s solo and in the tutti choir line. The majority of the section remains, however, grounded in C Major. Again, at the end of the section, for all days, “*I’olamim*” is repeated three times with a

⁷⁷Ibid.

strong authentic cadence between the second and third repetition (m. 69). The imagery of the text and its repetition accomplishes the following for the end of this section. First, the notion of "forever" comes from the repetition of the text. And second, the decrescendo and downward motion of the melody brings the section to an expected close.

The *chatimah* section is wholly in C major and reflects the *nusach* elements typically used for an ending passage on the High Holy Days. The organ accompaniment is typical of accompanied *nusach*, with little more than held-over chords. The choir's response "*Baruch hu uvaruch sh'mo*" and the "*Amen*" both adhere strictly to *nusach*. The "ahs" in the pre-cadential phrase provide modern harmony mixed with the restatement of the *nusach* theme, and suggests the awe of the prayer text itself in addition to the significance and majesty of *Rosh Hashanah*.⁷⁸

The cadences which end each section of *Ahavat Olam* are tonally stronger than those in the *V'shamru*. Each section of this work is given a more complete development and therefore each comes to a more complete end. The A section ends with an authentic V-I cadence; the B section concludes with a V₇-i cadence in a minor; the textual homophony of section C concludes with ii-V₇, a half cadence in a minor; the playful "*v'nismach b'divrei toratecha uv'mitzvotcha l'olam va'ed*" text in section D ends with a plagal I₇-IV with a C pedal; the reprise section E concludes using an authentic V-i cadence; while the *nusach* "*Amen*" ending is arguably the weakest of all. Lacking

⁷⁸It should be noted here that the "ah" section melody is wholly in *nusach* associated with the High Holy Days, but the way in which it is voiced offers both a sense of traditional melody and the contemporary sound of synagogue music not bound by traditional *nusach*, as is the case in many contemporary pieces.

dominant tones, ii-I, the last cadence of the work in which the ii, functions as a sub-dominant, and resolves downward using parallel fifths. To the trained ear, the embellishment of the *nusach* motive in section E demonstrates Aloni's comfort in composing "*nusach* oriented" music.

A standard in many Reform congregations, this *Ahavat Olam* is a complex setting of a prayer which accompanies a complex part of the liturgy: Redemption. "The Torah teaches us that the only *true* life is one in the service of God, one that is dedicated to the study of Torah and performance of *mitzvo[t]*. When a person lives such a life on earth, he is assured that a natural consequence of his efforts is lengthy days of blessing and joy in the Eternal World to Come."⁷⁹

In contrast to the *V'shamru*, Aloni has set the *Ahavat Olam* with great attention to detail in each particular section. The piece is unmistakably complete, as all the sections seem capable of more or less standing on their own. I found most interesting the way he integrates the Hebrew and English in section A. Through his composition, he is assisting the congregation by translating the text of the Hebrew. He is taking into account the fact that some congregants may not be familiar with the theme of this prayer and provides it, to give the work more meaning to us. Additionally, his clever integration of High Holy Day *nusach* gives the piece a distinct High Holy Day sound. Even if a congregant is not familiar with the intricacies of Jewish music and the *nusach* corresponding to particular times of the year, this work is unmistakably *Rosh Hashanah*.

What makes Aloni's setting distinct is his use of traditional *nusach* themes

⁷⁹Scherman, *Ibid.*, p. 259.

of *Rosh Hashanah* in conjunction with his own harmonization and contemporary melodies. Rather than setting the traditional melody separate from his own, Aloni composes through the *nusach*, making it both prayerful and memorable.

CHAPTER FIVE – CONTEXT AND CONCLUSIONS

Now that the biographical background and musical analysis of Aloni's output has been presented, I will discuss Aloni's place within the world of Jewish music. To place Aloni's work into context is an important step in fully appreciating his musical compositions. Where does Aloni fit into the history of Jewish music composers? What qualities stand out in Aloni's compositions when looking at twentieth century Jewish music? These questions are addressed below. Their answers will help "close the last chapter" of Aloni's life, and allow us to appreciate his musical legacy.

Many parallels exist in the lives of Aloni and Isadore Freed (1900-1960). Born in Poland, Freed studied classical music and was an exceptional pianist. Like Aloni, Freed turned his efforts to Jewish music after a secular compositional career which included *String Quartet* (1925), a *Rhapsody for Clarinet, Strings and Piano* (1925), *Sonata for Violin and Piano* (1926), *Pygamlion Symphonic Rhapsody* (1926), and others. And, like Aloni, Freed chose to use non-Jewish harmonies and settings for some of his compositions. Freed's diverse Jewish musical output contains a *Chassidic* service, compositions in the Italian style of Solomone Rossi and works of "high art" in the choral tradition. His contribution to Jewish music includes a *Chassidic* service, a collection of High Holy Day settings, a *Sacred Service for Sabbath Eve Sabbath Morning*, as well as a number of psalm settings for orchestra.

Aloni too has a diverse musical output. While Freed relied on his classical musical background for his concepts of aesthetic and style, Aloni called on his musical

background, which included, his familiarity with film and television music.

Unlike Aloni, Freed formally studied *musach* and Jewish prayer modes. Aloni educated himself after taking his position at Valley Beth Shalom. Aloni and Freed were both selective in their use of *musach*. Neither felt compelled to always incorporate it into their compositions. For Aloni, good examples of his selective inclusion of *musach* contrast can be found in his liturgical settings in *S'fatai Tiftach* and *Friday Evening Music Old and New*. In the former, Aloni uses an esoteric Renaissance madrigal style and includes no traditional *musach*; in the latter, Aloni's setting of the call to worship, *Bar'chu*, uses *musach* for *Shabbat* and is marked "in a cantorial style."

In a 1950 unpublished paper made available by musicologist Dr. Mark Kligman, Freed cites three unsuccessful factors which he observed with respect to synagogue music: "The function of music [is] improperly exercised, a dearth of trained Jewish personnel [exists], the role of music and its value [is] not sufficiently appreciated."⁸⁰

Kligman cites Freed as seeing the need for music to enhance the atmosphere of the synagogue. Aloni's work to incorporate congregational melodies into many of his commissions indicates that he too was aware of this necessity. The esteemed rabbi of Valley Beth Shalom, Rabbi Harold Schulweis, regards Aloni as an innovator and a teacher, with the ability to teach theology, philosophy and Judaism through his compositions.⁸¹ Schulweis' comment infers that Aloni was expert in "musical *midrash*,"

⁸⁰ Mark Kligman, "Composers of the SSM: Isadore Freed," Paper Presented at *Music, Spirit & Scholarship: The Legacy of Eduard Birnbaum*, School of Sacred Music 50th Anniversary, New York, November 22-23, 1998, 6-7.

⁸¹ Rabbi Harold Schulweis, telephone interview by author, 1 July 2000.

the ability to tell the underlying story of a particular text. Schulweis also cites Aloni as having the ability to write memorable and moving melodies that both allow and encourage his congregation to sing.

In a number of Aloni's liturgical compositions he indicates optional parts for children's chorus or unison choir. Others are marked with solo lines but do not indicate any particular voice or voice type. According to Rabbi Schulweis, Aloni was writing his commissions keeping two things in mind: first, to be true to the cantor for whom he was writing, and second, not to limit the commissioned piece by making the "performance requirements" too stringent. If the commissioning cantor wanted a piece for professional choir, children's choir and cantor, Aloni would oblige. After the piece was delivered and premiered, Aloni would suggest an alternative or rewrite the professional choral line with an accompaniment, so that a congregation without access to a professional choir could use the music.

While Freed envisioned that the ideal synagogue would have "a cantor, music director, organist and religious school music teacher,"⁸² Freed wanted Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion, School of Sacred Music to offer a training program at its New York school to formally educate synagogue organists, music directors and music educators. Aloni served as both music director and organist/accompanist at Valley Beth Shalom for thirty years. Aloni received "on the job training" in Jewish music from Cantor Samuel Fordis.

Freed played an active role in the founding of the School of Sacred Music at

⁸²Kligman, *Composers of the SSM*, 7.

Hebrew Union College–Jewish Institute of Religion and served on the faculty for a number of years. His contribution of synthesizing the modal structure of synagogue services with Western music will remain his legacy. Freed was an innovator, known for “taking from the past [of musical style] and reincorporating it into the present.”⁸³

Composers such as Abraham W. Binder, Herbert Fromm and Isadore Freed have left a lasting impression on Jewish music that allow contemporary composers like Aminadav Aloni to write, without trepidation, “experimental,” innovative music for the synagogue. The aesthetic for which Aloni composes builds upon not only his background as a classical pianist and the examples of his predecessors in the field of Jewish music, but on his ability to create innovative new settings for the aesthetic of the late-twentieth century, post-modern Jew. The goal of many twentieth century composers is to incorporate many different styles into their work, while expressing that combination of styles in a post modern aesthetic.⁸⁴

The composer, Michael Isaacson, a friend of Aloni and a prolific composer living in Los Angeles, is important to this study. Like Aloni, Isaacson’s career includes composing secular scores for film and television. Unlike Aloni, Isaacson’s music education was in composition, and Aloni’s education was in piano performance. Both have composed extensively for the synagogue and for other secular venues.

Isaacson is eloquent and vocal about his views of synagogue music from a

⁸³Kligman, *Composers of the SSM*, 9.

⁸⁴Aaron Copland, *What to Listen for in Music* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939; New York: Mentor, 1999), 159.

composer's point of view and has been outspoken about changes in synagogue music. Many of his compositions incorporate a "commercial feel," often sounding somehow familiar to the listener on the first hearing. In 1977 he said, "I am optimistic that the next decade will bring a new wave of musical offerings that synthesize the popularism and relevance of today with the classicism and rich heritage that has been handed down to us."⁸⁵

Aloni's commercial music background cannot be overlooked when placing his compositions into the context of the late twentieth century. He composed jingles for television commercials and wrote scores for both television and film. Aspects of his secular career are present in his compositional style for the synagogue. Many of his works, like Isaacson's, contain melodies which seem familiar to the listener and can be easily learned. Aloni's *Hallel*, for example, contains the kind of melodies the listener will leave humming. Aloni derived great pleasure from hearing his music hummed by congregants as he walked down the hall of his synagogue.⁸⁶ Many forms of music have melodies that are catchy, Aloni capitalized on his gift to easily compose them, and brought many of them into his synagogue works.

As a composer, Aloni took his understanding of synagogue music and factored in the commercial effect. Aloni used his distinct skill in composing melodies that automatically sound familiar and "catchy" to a congregation. In the later part of his life

⁸⁵Mark Slobin, *Chosen Voices: The Story of the American Cantorate*, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1989), 250-251.

⁸⁶Arkush, "Singing His Praises."

when composing the *Hallel* service, he became expert in combining the two venues commercial and secular.

In terms of compositional devices, this aesthetic of immediately familiar music is rarely present in the early to mid twentieth century works of Freed, Binder, Fromm or Helfman. The era of television is still relatively new to the history of Jewish music, but I proffer that the difference between the early to mid twentieth century and the late twentieth century aesthetic of Jewish music is partly due to the roles that television, radio and film play in the lives of both composers and worshippers. The listener (or congregant, in this case) is already tuned into this aesthetic of commercial music because of the ever-present influence of radio and television. Therefore, Aloni gives the listener a similar aesthetic during a worship service. This does not mean that the music of Aloni (or two composers of similar style: Finkelstein and Isaacson) is trite because it has a catchy tune. Rather, the influence of the age of radio and television affects the way composers, particularly Aloni, envision the needs of their worshippers.

Moreover, the aesthetic of the synagogue has changed in the last fifty years. The once formal worship services are being transformed into more relaxed, more personal settings. The clergy is often at the same level as the congregation, not standing high above them. The worshipper is more likely to attend services in "dressy casual" attire rather than in a suit and tie. Of course there was radio and Broadway music when Binder, Freed and Fromm were composing. The difference between then and now is the culture of worship in general. The concept of a majestic God who is found in the ceilings of high, formal cathedrals, is changing. Rather, more casual, informal synagogue experiences

express the notion of God that is found in personal reflection and inner solace.⁸⁷

Obviously, synagogue music differs from the music of the radio, television or a Broadway musical. The composer has a higher duty than the selling of a product or setting the mood for a particular movie scene. The composer of sacred music is charged with creating the melody and, if desired, the accompaniment of the prayers of individuals. This is not an easy task. Janet Walton, contributor and co-editor of *Sacred Sound and Social Change* makes a bold and fitting statement about the direction that the music of worship should head: "Congregants should expect sacred music to be visionary. . . They want music that asks something of them even beyond when they can anticipate; their music should invite them to experience the extraordinary capacities of God's ways."⁸⁸

Aloni's synagogue music captures the needs and desires of worshippers at a particular time in history. Trends will change, needs and desires will change. The musical gifts left by Aminadav Aloni are a snapshot of his concept of what he envisions are those needs and desires. He composed settings for all of the liturgy of *Erev Shabbat* in a number of styles so as to account for the diverse needs of worshippers. His wide range of compositions are appropriate for services with solemn moods (*S'lichot service*) and for the unfettered expression of joy (*Wedding Service*).

⁸⁷For a complete discussion of this topic, refer to Lawrence A. Hoffman, *The Art of Public Prayer: Not for Clergy Only*, 2d ed., (Woodstock, VT: Skylight Paths Publishing, 1999).

⁸⁸Janet R. Walton, "North American Culture and Its Challenges to Sacred Sound," in *Sacred Sound and Social Change: Liturgical Music in Jewish and Christian Experience*, Lawrence A. Hoffman and Janet R. Walton, eds., vol. 3 of *Two Liturgical Traditions* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 4-5.

Aloni's compositions show a sensitivity to the congregant on a multitude of levels. First and foremost, he is able to disseminate the intricate meanings of liturgical texts. His *midrashic* interpretation in *V'shamru* from *S'fatai Tiftach*, for example, tells of his deep textual understanding. Second, his experience in secular commercial music gives him the ability to compose melodies that are catchy, inspirational and memorable. His *Hallel* setting, with the expressive rhythms and melodies, teaches the lessons that the psalms contain. Third, his music is applicable in the synagogue today because congregants are eager to sing and much of Aloni's music encourages them to do so.

What is Aminadav Aloni's legacy? Only time and further study will fully tell. Two key points emerge that warrant further attention.

First, Aloni's compositional styles are vastly diverse ranging from avant-garde to jazz. To recognize the value of the breadth of his synagogue music, one must look at his entire musical output. One or two compositions is not enough to give the listener a sense of the rest of his compositions. According to Aaron Copland, the paradigm of twentieth century composition is to combine a number of styles and aesthetics using modern idioms. Aloni embodied Copland's diversity. There is a serious consequence to listening to only a handful of compositions of any twentieth century composer, especially Aloni. The consequence is attributing the style of one or two pieces to the general output of the composer, thereby forsaking the rest of the composer's work.

Second, Aloni's music is a statement of his personality. "No composer can write into his music a value that he does not possess as a man. His character may be streaked with human frailties—like Lully's or Wagner's, for example—but what ever is fine in his

music will come from whatever is fine in him as a man."⁸⁹ Aloni's music embraces both the performer and listener. For the performer, much of his synagogue music is melodic, rhythmically stimulating and harmonically challenging. For the listener (or congregant,) his congregational melodies encourage participation because he derived personal joy from hearing his music sung not only by performers, but by worshippers as well. He encouraged inclusion in his congregational music, using both Hebrew and English in many settings. His use of both languages shows his appreciation that not all congregants are able to understand the meaning of the Hebrew text while singing along.

The first point identifies the need to recognize and appreciate Aloni's compositional diversity by looking at his entire Jewish library. The second, and equally important point suggests that the purveyor of Aloni's collection recognize the presence of the composer's personality in each work. It is my sense that Aloni's most significant contributions to Jewish music are his ability to compose Jewish music that is true to the text, the expression of meaningful musical *midrash*, making a memorable melodic impression and portraying his own view of and commitment to Judaism in an authentic way.

⁸⁹Aaron Copland, *What to Listen for in Music*, 213.

APPENDIX A
Music and Chart: *V'shamru*

V'shamru

in memory of Cantor Allan Michelson

80

SECTION A
Sostenuto

Aminadav Aloni

2 bar phrase

Sop *p* V' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el v' - sham - ru et ha - shab - bat

Alto *p* V' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el v' - sham - ru et ha - shab - bat

Men V' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el

Piano *p* Legato

Piano only for rehearsal

C minor: i (v iv v) VI Ebmaj: I

Sop 5 (13) la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam b'rit o - lam

Alto la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam b'rit o - lam

Men la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam b'rit o - lam

Piano

IV IV_b V_b V I V_b VI VII_b VII_b iv V

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SECTION B (development)

16 2 *Poco piu mosso* *2 bar phrase*

Sop
lam bei - ni u - vein b'nei yis - ra - el

Alto
o - lam bei - ni u - vein b'nei yis - ra - el

Men
lam bei - ni u - vein b'nei yis - ra - el

Raised L.T.

Piano
Poco piu mosso
(C minor) i - VII II $\frac{V\sharp}{V}$ v

19

Sop
ot hi l' - o - lam ot hi l' - o - lam ki she - shet ya - mim a -

Alto
ot o - lam ot o - lam ki she - shet ya - mom a -

Men
ot hi ot hi ki she - shet ya - mim a -

Piano
i^o v - 7 i iv v7 $\frac{IV_6}{V}$ vii^o i -

22

82
Tranquillo

Sop
sah A - do - nai et ha - sha - ma - yim v' - et ha - a - rets u - va -

Alto
sah A - do - nai et ha - sha - ma - yim v' - et ha - a - rets u - va -

Men
sah A - do - nai et ha - sha - ma - yim v' - et ha - a - rets u - va -

Piano
4-3 Susp.
vii⁷ i ii III - IV⁶ V VI i⁴ iv⁶ $\frac{5}{4}$ i i
plag. cadence Succession on i

25

Poco rit.....

Unresolved

Sop
yom ha-sh'vi-i u - va - yom ha-sh'vi-i sha - vat va - yi - na - fash 4-3 Susp.

Alto
yom ha-sh'vi-i u - va - yom ha-sh'vi-i sha - vat va - yi - na - fash

Men
yom ha-sh'vi-i u - va - yom ha-sh'vi-i sha - vat va - yi - na - fash

Piano
Poco rit.....
V V₇ VI VI₆ Major: V I vi₆ iv₆ iv VI-3

SECTION A'

29 Tempo primo

Sop *pp* v' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el v' - sham - ru et ha - shab - bat

Alto *pp* v' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el v' - sham - ru et ha - shab - bat

Men v' - sham - ru b'nei yis - ra - el

Piano *pp* Tempo primo

(C minor) i VI 8th Maj: III I

33

Sop la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam b'rit o - lam

Alto la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam

Men la - a - sot et ha - shab - bat l' - do - ro - tam

Piano *pp*

IV IV₆ V₆ V₇ VI₆ VI₇ (C min. 3. 1) VI₇ V₇ I

Authentic cadence

V'shamru

from *S'fatai Tiftach*

Translation of text:

The Israelite people shall keep the Sabbath, observing the Sabbath throughout the ages as a covenant for all time.
It shall be a sign for all time between me and the people of Israel.

For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He ceased from work and was refreshed. (JPS)

GENERAL OVERVIEW

| | | | | | |
|----------|-------|-----|-----|-------|----------|
| | A | | B | | A' |
| c minor: | i III | III | i v | i III | iv V-3 i |

Section A

mm. 1-9

of Bars
c minor:
Eb Major:
Phrasing:

| | | | | | |
|-------|-------|------|--------|------|-----|
| 2 | 2 | 4 | | | |
| i | i III | | | IV V | |
| | I | IV V | IV7 V6 | ii | III |
| 2+2+4 | | | | | |

Section B

mm. 10-21

of Bars
c minor:
Eb Major
Phrasing:

| | | | | | | | | | | |
|-----------|-------|------|-----------------|--------------|-----|---|--------------|---------|--------|--|
| 2 | 2 | | 4 | | | | 4 | | | |
| i III V/V | ii V7 | i IV | IV6 | i vii7 vii64 | iv6 | i | i V7 VI V/II | III vi6 | iv V-3 | |
| V I | | | | | | | V I | | | |
| 2+2+4+4 | | | succession on i | | | | | | | |

Section A'

mm. 22-29

of Bars
c minor:
Phrasing:

| | | |
|-------------------------|--|------------|
| 2+2+4 | | 2 |
| Exact repeat of mm. 1-6 | | i VI7 v7 i |
| 2+2+4+2 | | |

not a strong cadence because
of the absence of the leading tone

authentic cadence on Eb
in C minor, (no modulation)

unresolved 4/3 suspension
to obscure modality of the
chord and incomplete ending
to be able to restate A as a
surprise

APPENDIX B
Music and Chart: *Ahavat Olam*

Ahavat Olam

for Cantor, Mixed Choir (SATB) and Keyboard

Aminadav Aloni

SECTION A

Andante ♩ = 92

Soprano
Alto
(or Children's
Choir)

Keyboard

mp A - ha - vat o - lam, With e - ver last - ing

C Maj: I V₆ passing tones IV V₇

love hast Thou loved, hast Thou loved the

(vii) I IV vi ii₇ iii₇
passing tones parallel 5ths
a min: iv₇ v₇

house of Is - ra - el, Is - ra - el beit Yis - ra - el am - cha a - hav - ta:

C Maj: I₆ / abass ii₇ V₇ I₇ iii₇ ii₇ V₇ / vi vi
a min: vii / abass v₇ ii₇ V i

passing tone anticipation
evading cadential feel

Cantor

11

mp A - ha - vat o - lam,

p A - ha - vat o - lam, La la la la la la la

high holy Davrusach

outline of V

pt.

pt.

C Major (I) ii^b III^b bass V, I - 5 I VII^b *pt.*

15

A - ha - vat o - lam _____ beit Yis-ra-el am - cha beit _____

la la

(ii) *pt.* *pt. (i)* IV^b V - 4

IV V⁷ I IV vi

19

20

Yis-ra-el am - cha a - hav - ta: A - ha - vat, a - ha - vat o - lam

la la

- VI^b - V iii^b/₄ VI⁵ VII⁵ =

IV I⁵ I *ii^b III^b VI*

a min: iv⁷ V i

SECTION B

23

am - cha - a - hav - ta: *mf* To - rah u - mita

la la la

(I - -)

mf

IV ii-5 IV/gbass V7 I-3 - - Vi
(amin. i)

26

vot, chu - kim u' - mish - pa - tim

echo of vocal line

iii7 IV V7-5 (ii) Vi -

29

o - ta - nu o - ta - nu li - ma d' -

legato parallel 5ths

parallel 8ves

ii7 iii - IV7 ii7 iii7

c SECTION C

ca. S High Holy Day nusach

mf *cresc.* Al kein, A - do nai E lo

mf *cresc.* Al kein, al kein, A - do - nai

mf *cresc.* Al kein, al kein, A - do - nai

mf *cresc.* Al kein, A - do nai

mf *cresc.*

C Maj: vi I VII7/ii

ambt i iii7 iii VII6

Variation on nusach

36

hei nu, b' - shach-bei - nu uv' ku-mei- nu na- si-ach b' - chu-ke

dim.

E - lo - hei - nu b' - shach-bei - nu uv' ku-mei- nu na- si-ach b' - chu-ke

dim.

E - lo - hei - nu b' - shach-bei - nu uv' kü-mei- nu na- si-ach b' - chu-ke

dim.

E - lo - hei - nu b' - shach-bei - nu uv' ku-mei- nu na- si-ach b' - chu-ke

dim.

C Maj: ii b VII7 ii V7 ii

A min: iv rep. iv (succession) iv i4 iv7 ii4/3

SECTION D

40

mp call call

cha, v'-nis - mach b'-div - rei to - ra - te - cha

cha, v'-nis - mach b'-div - rei to - ra v'-nis-mach b'-div-

mp response response

cha, v'-nis-mach b'-div-rei v'-nis-mach b'-div-

cha, v'-nis-mach b'-div-rei v'-nis-mach b'-div-

p

a min: V₇ i₉ i iv₇

44

v'-nis - mach b'-div - rei to-ra - te - cha

rei to-ra-te cha, b'-div - rei to-ra - te - cha uv' - mits-vo-

rei to-ra-te cha v'-nis - mach-b'-div - rei to-ra - te - cha uv' - mits-vo-

rei to-ra-te cha, b'-div - rei b'-div-rei to-ra - te - cha

#F *tr. resolves*

V i₉ i iv₇

[50]

198

dim.

1'-o - lam va - ed, 1'-o - lam va -

dim.

te cha 1'-o - lam va - ed, 1'-o - lam va -

dim.

te cha 1'-o - lam, 1'-o - lam, 1'-o - lam 1'-o - lam

dim.

1'-o - lam, 1'-o - lam, 1'-o - lam 1'-o - lam

CMaj: V

I7

IV7

I7

amin: VII

III7

VI7

Cantor

poco rit.

SECTION E
mf a tempo

Ki heim cha - yel nu v' -

ed. _____

ed. _____

pp

1'-o - lam va _____ ed.

pp

1'-o - lam va _____ ed.

poco rit.

pp IV

V

mf

pp

CMaj: I

C Pedal

VII

Variation (embellishment of nusach)

o ____ rech ya ____ mei - nu, u ____ va - hem ne - h'-geh

CMaj: I F7 I IV I (passing) II7 III7 V

amih: i

ya - nam - va - lay' - leh. Tutti *mf*

transition *f* a - ha - vat cha

CMaj: VI IV F7 I F#6

amih: i

al ta - sir mi ____ me ____ nu l'o ____ la ____ min,

CMaj: IV F7 I IV VI II7 I/bass

93
CHATIMAH SECTION
Meno Mosso

70

mf *p* *mf* Ba -

mf *p* authentic cadence (perfect) L.F.

CMaj: Vi ii7 V7 I iii7 ii7

a min: iv7 V i

mf *mf* Choir *Rubato* o - heiv a - mo - Yis -

mf Ba - ruch hu u - va - ruch sh' - mo, *Rubato*

CMaj: I 7/4 V IV

77 a tempo rit. *pp* A - men

p ah *pp* rit. A - men

p ah a tempo *pp* plagal cadence

V I rit. ii7 I

Ahavat Olam for High Holy Days

Translation:

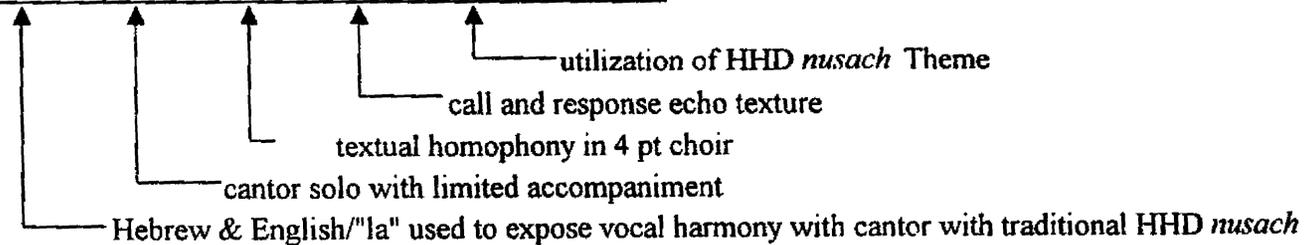
Unending is Your love for Your people, the House of Israel: Torah and Mitzvot, laws and precepts have You taught us. Therefore, O God, when we lie down and when we rise up, we will meditate on Your laws and rejoice in Your Torah and Mitzvot for ever. Day and night we will reflect on them, for they are our life and the length of our days. O may Your love never depart from our hearts! Blessed are You, O God: You love Your people Israel. (GOR, p. 55)

GENERAL DESIGN

SECTION
Cantor
Accomp.
4 pt Choir
2 pt Choir
Key
Cadence

| | A | A | B | C | D | E | Ch. |
|------------|-----|-----|------|-------|-------|------|-------|
| Cantor | | | | | | | |
| Accomp. | | | | | | | |
| 4 pt Choir | | | | | | | |
| 2 pt Choir | | | | | | | |
| Key | C | C | C | C-a | C-a | C(a) | C |
| Cadence | n/a | V-I | v7-i | ii-V7 | I7-IV | V-i | ii7-I |

Defining features



A shaded space in the table indicates the selected part is used in the section.
A blank space in the table indicates the selected part is not used in the section

APPENDIX C
Catalog of Aloni music published by Transcontinental Music



Catalog Items

The following catalog items contain "aloni":

Touch  when shown to hear sample of the selection

(Abbreviations used in Catalog entries.)

Aloni, Aminadav

A Wedding Celebration

Medium: Solo (High), Keyboard

Language: Hebrew English

'Music for a Jewish Wedding': Prelude, Processional, Hinach Yafah Rayati, Mi Adir, Set Me as a Seal, Verastich Li, Sheva B'rachot, Wedding Recessional. A collection of songs to encompass the whole wedding. Includes a prelude, processional and recessional for keyboard solo and the remaining for voice and keyboard

No. 991383 \$6.00



Ahavat Olam

Medium: Cantor, SATB, Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

GOR p. 25

No. 991229 \$1.50

Ahavat Olam (RENTAL)

Medium: SATB, String Quartet or Organ

Language: -

Arrangement of organ part from TMP 991229. GOR p. 25. Duration: 4.00

No. 970227 \$60.00

B'Rosh Hashanah

Medium: Cantor, SATB, Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

No. 991355 \$1.75

Sargon, Simon/Cohen, Gerald/Shemer, Naomi/Isaacson, Michael/Carlebach,
Shlomo/Porkrass, Dmitri/Finkelstein, Meir/Starer, Robert/Richards, Stephen/Aloni,
Aminadav

Children's, Treble and Adult Beginner's SAMPLER Package (Kolot Yaldeinu (Voices of Our Children))

Medium: Soli, Children's, Treble or Adult Beginner's Choir, Keyboard, SATB

97

Language: Hebrew English

Sampler includes first pages of music, catalogue and CD. Mah Yafeh Hayom, Sing His Praise, Adonai Ro-i, Hachofesh Hagadol, How Can I Sing?, Jerusalem Medley, Zog Nit Keyn Mol, Ani Ma-amin, Come Let Us Sing, Simu Shemen, V'al Kulam, V'ahavta, You Shall Love, Tov l'Hodot. See also accompanying CD (TMP 950063)

No. 993063 \$2.00

Aloni, Aminadav

Friday Evening Music (Old and New)

Medium: Cantor, Congregation, Unison Choir, Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

Tov l'hodot, L'cha Dodi, Bar'chu, Mi Chamocha, Hashkiveinu, V'sham'ru, Shalom Rav

No. 992021 \$9.00

Psalm 121: Esa Einai el Heharim

Medium: SATB, Cello

Language: Hebrew

'I Will Lift Up Mine Eyes'

No. 991210 \$1.25

Saturday Morning Music (Old and New)

Medium: Cantor, 2 Part Choir, Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

Mi Chamocha, K'dushah, R'tseh Vim'nuchateinu, Yism'chu, R'tseh B'amcha Yisrael, Ets Chayim

No. 991476 \$9.00

Sheva B'rachot (7 Blessings)

Medium: Solo (Med), Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

A lyrical setting of the wedding blessings

No. 991381 \$2.50

Uv'chein Tein Kavod

Medium: Cantor, SATB, Keyboard

Language: Hebrew

GOR p. 262

No. 992027 \$1.50

Zeh Hayom (This is the Day)

Medium: Solo (High), Keyboard, Flute

Language: Hebrew English

Psalm 118. GOP p. 406

No. 992020 \$2.50

APPENDIX D
Aminadav Aloni Music Foundation Music Catalog
and unpublished background materials

AMINADAV ALONI MUSIC FOUNDATION 99

Catalogue of Jewish Music

2000

(*) Available on tape (**) Book and tape (√) Available on CD (√√) Book and CD
(TM)- Published by Transcontinental Music (Δ) Published by Eriel Music.

(New) applies to pieces with either new accompaniment or recording or both.

Some compositions are mentioned more than once when they fit into more than one category.

Friday Evening Services

Aleinu L'shabeiach - (√) Jazz service for Solos, Choir, Small Combo

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Candle blessing | 11. Yismchu |
| 2. Kiddush | 12. May the Words |
| 3. L'cha Dodi | 13. S'u Sh'arim |
| 4. Barchu | 14. Baruch Shenatan |
| 5. Sh'ma | 15. Al Shloshah D'varim |
| 6. You Shall Love | 16. Hodo Al Erets |
| 7. Hashkiveinu | 17. Ets Chayim |
| 8. Mi Chamocha | 18. Let Us Adore- Vene'emar |
| 9. V'shamru | 19. Shalom Rav |
| 10. Ma-ariv Aravim | 20. Ein Keloheinu |

Chassidic Service SATB, Solo, Organ/Piano

1. Ma Tovv
2. L'chu N'ranenah
3. L'cha Dodi (Shamor V'zachor Likrat shabbat Hitnaari Hitoreri Boi)
4. Barchu
5. El Chai
6. Shma
7. Mi Chamocha
8. V'shamru
9. Chatzi Kaddish

- 10.Kiddush
- 11.Aleinu
- 12.Adon Olam.

100

Old - New Service -(TM)

Cantor, Congregational Choir, Keyboard (or String quartet)

- 1.Tov L'hodot
- 2.L'cha Dodi
- 3.Barchu
- 4.Hashkivenu
- 5.Mi Chamocho
- 6.Shalom Rav
- 7.V'shamru

Shir Chadash - Δ Children & Teens or SAB

- 1.Shiru Laadonai Shir Chadash
- 2.L'cha Dodi (Likrat Shabbat Hitnaari Boi)
- 3.Ahavat Olam
- 4.Emet V'emunah
- 5.V'shamru
- 6.Mechalkel Chaim
- 7.Shalom Rav
- 8.Aleinu
- 9.Bayom Hahu
- 10.Adon Olam.

Ta-amei Sepharad Solo, one and two part Choir, Piano

- | | |
|-------------------|----------------|
| 1.Candle Blessing | 8.V'shamru |
| 2.Shalom Aleichem | 9.Hashkiveinu |
| 3.L'cha Dodi | 10.Modim |
| 4.Barchu | 11.Shalom Rav |
| 5.Sh'ma | 12.Aleinu |
| 6.Mi Chamochoh | 13.Oseh Shalom |
| 7.Ahavat Olam | 14.Adon Olam |

Songs from Home Available in Solos only or with one and two part choir

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1.Hachamah | 7.Hashkiveinu |
| 2.Shalom Aleichem | 8.Sh'ma V'ahavta |
| 3.L'cha Dodi | 9.Aleinu |
| 4.Mi Chamochoh | 10.Oseh Shalom |
| 5.Ahavat Olam | 11.Shalom Rav |

Additional Music for Friday Evening Services

| | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Atah Gibor -Somech Noflim | Solo, congregation | from Temple Emanu- El Service |
| Modim Anachnu Lach | Solo | " |
| Sim Shalom | Solo or SATB Solo | " |
| May the Words | Solo or SATB Solo | " |
| Mah Tovv | Cantor, SAB, Keyboard | |
| Mah Tovv | Solo, Piano | |
| Ahavat Olam | SATB, Solo: T/S | |
| Hashkivenu | SATB, Solo: T/S | |
| Hashkiveinu | Solo & two part choir | |
| Uv'tseil K'nafecha | Two part choir | |
| Shalom Rav | Solo, or Solo and SATB, Keyboard | |

Shabbat Morning Services

Old-New for Saturday Morning, a Shacharit Service - (TM) Solo, two-part choir,
Piano

- 1.R'tsei B'amcha
- 2.R'tsei Vimnuchateinu
- 3.Yismchu
- 4.Mi Chamochah
- 5.K'dushah l'shabbat
- 6.Ets Chayim

Torah Service (*) SATB, Congregational Solos

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| 1.Ein Kamocha | 8.Sh'ma |
| 2.Av Harachamim | 9.L'cha Adonai |
| 3.Vay'hi Binsoa | 10.Rom'mu |
| 4.Ki Mitsiyon | 11.Hodo Al Erets |
| 5.Beh Ana Rachets | 12.Kol Adonai |
| 6.Adonai adonai | 13.S'u Sh'arim |
| 7.Va-ani T'filati | 14.Ets Chayim. |

Additional Saturday Morning Music

102

| | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| Ashrei | Children / congregation | Keyboard |
| R'tseh | T/S | Piano |
| Atah Gibor - Somech Noflim | Solo congregation from Temple Emanu- | El Service |
| Modim Anachnu Lach | Solo | " |
| Sim Shalom | Solo or SATB | Solo " |
| May the Words | Solo or SATB | Solo " |
| Mah Tovu | Cantor | SAB Keyboard |
| Mah Tovu | Solo | Piano |

Yizkor Service

| | | | |
|-----------------|------|-----------------|--------------------------|
| Mah Adam | (✓) | SAB | from S'fatai Tiftach |
| Shiviti | (✓) | SAB Solo | " |
| Kaddish (Yatom) | (✓) | SATB | " |
| Rebuke Me Not | | Solo (Psalm VI) | |
| Strange Envy | (**) | Solo | Rabbi H.M.Schulweis poem |
| Mah Enosh | | A Solos | |

High Holiday Music

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Ahavat Olam - (TM) | SATB, Solo Organ/Piano or String quartet |
| Birth Is a Beginning | SATB organ, cello, Poem by Rabbi A. Fine |
| B'rosh Hashanah (*) | Cantor, SATB, keyboard |
| Hal'luyah | SATB, Keyboard |
| Sh'ma Koleinu | Solo, Keyboard |
| U'vchen Ten Kavod - (TM) | SATB Solo O/P or Str. quartet |

Slichot Service

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| L'chu N'ran'nah | Cantor, SATB, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |
| B'motsa-ei M'nuchah | Cantor, SATB, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |
| Adonai Adonai | Cantor, SATB, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |
| Sh'ma Koleinu | Cantor, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |
| K'racheim Av | Cantor, SATB, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |
| Rachamana | Cantor, SATB, Keyboard (or Fl. Ob. Vn. Vla. Cello.Piano) |

Wedding Music

103

A Wedding Service - (TM)

Keyboard, Solo

1. Prelude
2. Processional
3. Hinach Yafah Raayati
4. Mi Adir
5. Set Me As a Seal
6. Verastich Li
7. Recessional.

Additional Wedding Music

Sheva Brachot - (TM)

Solo, Piano

Tavas L'avavi

Voice, Piano (to a Bialik poem)

Verastich Li

SAB, Solo

One Song Ago

Solo, Keyboard

Don't Ask Me to Leave You

Solo (from the book of Ruth)

Holidays, Festivals and Israel Independence

Chanukkah

Al Hanisim

Four part male chorus, Trombone

Al Hanisim

SATB, Solo, Two part choir, Keyboard (or String Quartet)

Chanukkah Recipe

Children (and Adults if you wish)

Or Ha-am

SATB, Solos, Chamber Orchestra - Eight Lights

Sukkot

Koheleth

SATB, Solos, Symphony Orchestra - Four Movements

Shavuot

Ruth

SAB, Solos: SAB 5 Instruments - Four Chapters

Pesach

Shir Hashirim

ST, Piano, Harp, Oboe, String Quartet - Marcia Falk text

Hallel

SATB, Solos, Childrens choir and String Orchestra - Eight Movements

Hallel (*) (New) SATB, Congregation

104

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---------------------|
| 1.Baruch Atah | 9.Hal'lu Et Adonai |
| 2.Hal'luyah | 10.Hodu |
| 3.M'kimi | 11.Pitchu Li |
| 4.B'tseit Yisrael | 12.Odcha Ki Anitani |
| 5.Lo Lanu | 13.Ana Adonai |
| 6.Adonai Z'charanu Y'varech | 14. Baruch Haba |
| 7.Shuvi Nafshi | 15.Ki L'cha Tov |
| 8.Ma Ashiv La'adonai | |

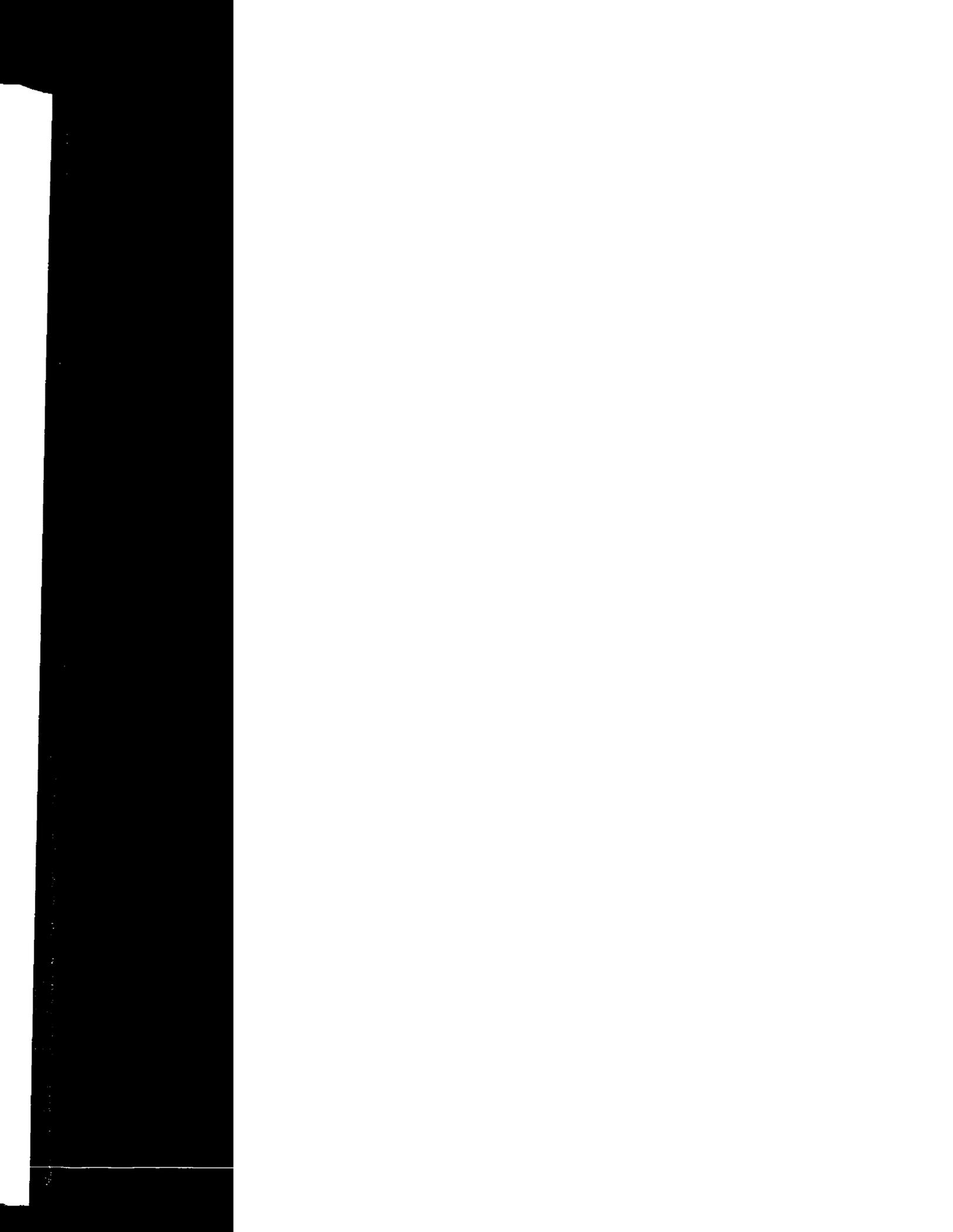
Special Occasions

Solos

| | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Birkat Hachodesh | Solo, piano | Blessing of New month |
| Birkat Hachodesh (same) | High voice, cello | " |
| Eshet Chayil | Solo, piano | Woman of Valor |
| Ha-osek B'tsorchei Tsibur | S/T, Piano | Public Servants |
| Hayashan Yi(TM)hadesh | S/ T, Piano | Rededication |
| Hineni Shlacheni | Solo | Yitro |
| Mi Shebeirach | Solo (Rabbi H.M.Schulweis poem) | Healing |
| Mi Shebeirach | Solo | Girl baby naming |
| Noah | Solo | Righteous Man |
| R'faenu | Solo, Piano | Healing |
| R'faenu V'nerafe | S/T, Piano | Honoring a Physician |
| Shehecheyanu | Congregation or Solo | |
| She is Always There | Solo | Mother |
| T'ilah L'medinat Israel | Solo | Israel Independence |
| Zeh Hayom (*) (This is the Day) | Solo, O/P and flute | Celebration |

Choir

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| Birkat Hamazon | Congregational |
| Birth Is a Beginning | SATB organ cello Poem by Rabbi A. Fine |
| Dirshuni Vich'yu | Cantor SATB |
| Mi Shebeirach | SATB Solo |
| Mishpachah | Children SATB Solos 4 inst |
| Ana Hashem | SAB Solos: SAB |
| Divrei Torah | Solo SATB Piano |
| Hal'luyah | SATB Keyboard |
| K'nachal Eitan | SATB (Madrigal) |



Shalom Rav
V'hayah B'achrit Hayamim

Teens SATB Solos: Mez.T 6 inst.
Solo SATB Keyboard Trumpet

105

Duets

Amar Rabbi Elazar
Shir Hashirim

TB Organ Flute Guitar
Passover-ST Piano Harp Oboe String Quartet Marcia Falk text

Songs of Passage

| | | |
|----------------|------------|------------------------------|
| Hayaldah Hazot | Solo Piano | Girl naming |
| R'faenu | Solo Piano | Healing |
| Pirkei Chayim | Solo Piano | Parents' prayer |
| Sh'ma B'ni | Solo piano | Bar Mitzvah |
| Passages | Solo piano | Relationship |
| Yshalem Adonai | Solo Piano | Blessing for a girl or woman |

Passages in Poetry (**)

12 poems of Rabbi H.M. Schulweis

| | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1. In My Arms | The Child |
| 2. Touch My Heart | " |
| 3. Between | " |
| 4. The Third Ear | God & Self & Others |
| 5. Whose Am I | " |
| 6. Havdalalah | Around the Shabbath Table |
| 7. Mirror Eyes | Marriage |
| 8. Nature Pursues Its Own Course | Sickness |
| 9. May I Not Soon Forget | " |
| 10. It Is Less Distant Now | Yahrzeit and Yizkor |
| 11. Strange Envy | " |
| 12. It Is Never Too Late | " |

Art Songs

From Circle of Love (settings of sephardic poems)

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Yaldah Yafah Achat | B, Piano |
| Et Ezkerah Yom | " |
| Hatshukah Lih'yot Ishah | " |
| Et Echezeh | " |
| Imi | B/A, Piano -to a poem of Bialik |
| Mibeit Imi | S, Piano - to a poem of Leah Goldberg |
| Mirror Eyes | T/ S, Piano - to a poem by Rabbi H. M. Schulweis (different from |
| "Passages") | |
| Ha-osek B'tsorchei Tsibur | T/S, Piano |

Hayashan Yichahadesh
Pirkei Chayim
Sh'ma B'ni

Solo, Piano
Solo, Piano
Solo, Piano

106

Choral Collections and Cycles

Isaiah Settings for 8 Haftarot SATB, Solo, Keyboard

| | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Va-e(TM)hanan | Al Har Gavoha |
| R'eh- | Hatu Ozn'chem |
| Ekev- | Shim'u Elai |
| Shoftim- | Mah Na-avu |
| Ki Teitse | B'rega Katon |
| Ki Tavo- | Lo Yihyeh |
| Nitsavim- | Sos Asis |
| Vayelech | Ko Amar Adonai |

S'fatai Tiftach- Δ (√) (a cappella)

| | |
|------------------------|------|
| Adonai S'fatai Tiftach | SAB |
| V'shamru | SAB |
| Havu Ladonai | SAB |
| N'shamah T'horah | SAB |
| Ahavat Olam | SATB |
| Rabbi Shim'on | SATB |
| Magen Avot | SAB |
| Kol Yisrael | SAB |
| Mah Adam | SAB |
| Shiviti | SAB |
| Kaddish (Yatom) | SATB |
| Hatov | SAB |
| V'ahavta L're-acha | SAB |

Songs of Ascent SATB and Instruments

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|
| Psalm 121 Esa einai | SATB, Cello |
| Psalm 126 B'shuv Adonai | SATB, Piano |
| Psalm 130 Mima-amakim | SATB, Viola |
| Psalm 131 Adonai Lo Gavah libi | SATB, Violin |
| Psalm 133 Hineh Mah Tov | SATB, Tutti |

Concert Pieces for Chorus and Orchestra

107

| | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <u>Or Ha-am</u> | SATB, Solos | Chamber Orchestra |
| <u>Koheleth</u> Combo | SATB, Solos | Symphony Orchestra and Jazz |
| <u>Hallel</u> | SATB, Children choir, Solos | String Orchestra |
| <u>Ruth</u> | SAB, Solos, Narrator | Quintet |

Instrumental

Gilgul Shel Kaddish Piano, Violin, Viola, Cello

Dances

Rikudim Shel Ahavah (Dances of Love)

1. Dodi Yarad L'gano
2. Hinach yafah (Einaich Yonim)
3. Al Mishkavi Baleilot
4. Kol Dodi Hineh Zeh Ba
5. Ki Hineh Hastav Avar

Musicals

| | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| My Baby Brother Moses | Children's Musical | Book & Lyrics by Jim Ploss |
| Next Week Esther | Family Purim Musical | Book by Cohen, Lyrics by Ploss |

(*) Available on tape (**) Book and tape (✓) Available on CD (✓✓) Book and CD
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(New) applies to pieces with either new accompaniment or recording or both.

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!!!! website: coming soon

AMINADAV ALONI MUSIC FOUNDATION 108

Price List

For music published by Transcontinental Music (TM) contact them directly:
212-249-0100 or 838 Fifth Ave NYC NY10021

Complete Services:

| | | |
|------------------------------------|----------|-------------|
| Hallel (congregational) | incl. CD | \$100.00(ø) |
| Aleinu L'shabeach (Jazz Service) | incl CD | \$250.00(ø) |
| Ta-amei Sepharad (Spanish Service) | | \$250.00(ø) |
| Torah Service | incl. CD | \$ 75.00(ø) |
| Songs from Home | | — |

Other Published Music:

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------|--------------|
| S'fatai Tiftach | Book & CD | \$25.00 |
| S'fatai Tiftach | Book 1-5 | \$10.00 each |
| S'fatai Tiftach | Additional books | \$ 6.00 each |
| Passages in Poetry | Book & cassette | \$25.00 |
| Shir Chadash | Minimum 6 books | \$ 3.50 each |

Unpublished

| | | |
|--------------------------|----------|---------|
| Solo pieces | 2 copies | \$ 5.00 |
| Individual Choral pieces | 4 copies | \$10.00 |

Musical

| | |
|-----------------------|---------------|
| My Baby Brother Moses | \$250.00 (øø) |
| Next Week Esther | \$200.00 |

Orchestral Compositions:

Available on rental basis for the instrumental parts.
You need to purchase the choral parts.

See AAMF membership sheet for -- *SPECIAL ACC-GTM PROFESSIONAL MEMBERSHIP PRICING.*

There is a minimum \$5.00 charge for shipping and handling of each separate order-- regardless of size.

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AMINADAV ALONI
Composer, Musical Director.

109

Music for Movies and Television:

"F.T.A." with Jane Fonda, Donald Sutherland.
"The Small Miracle", Hallmark Hall of Fame,
with Vittorio De Sica, Raf Vallone.
"Once", with Christopher Mitchum.
"H Is for Heroin", with Greg Morris.
"World Vision" (over thirty one hour shows).
"Light of the Seven Days", "The Big Dig", "UFO Syndrome",
"Potpourri", "That Was the Year that Was" (13 shows),
"Roots", "Atlantis Revisited", "Celebrate the Children",
"Easter Seals", "Hug Tight", Democratic Party Telethon

Commercials:

Associated Banks of Colorado, Blue Cross, 3M, World Vision,
Harris and Frank, Instatune, Jantzen, Playboy Magazine,
Skateboard Expo International, Teen Challenge, UNICEF,
Dyna Gym, Republican Party, St. Jude Hospital, L.A. Mission

Music for Plays and Musicals:

"1970NE!" with Judy Kaye - Los Angeles, Capetown.
"Sholem Aleichem", with Nehemiah Persoff - U.S., Canada.
"The Happiness Bench", with Mariette Hartley - L.A., Philadelphia.
"Tonight, David", with Barbara Luna, Jack Bannon - Valiermo, L.A.
"Hermaphrodites and Hooligans", "Marrano", "Mr. Polly",
"Raise the Flag", "In a Garden", "Sganarelle"

Recordings:

Liberty Records, Disney Records, Cinema International

Musical Director:

Written for and/ or orchestrated and/ or conducted:
Pearl Bailey, Dikki Carr, Dale Evans, Betty Garrett, Robert Guillaume,
Florence Henderson, Linda Hopkins, Cheryl Ladd, Carol Lawrence,
The Lennon Sisters, Meredith MacCrae, Maureen McGovern,
Johnny Mathis, Melba Moore, Marni Nixon, Roy Rogers,
Danny Thomas, Sarah Vaughn, Ben Vereen, Adrian Z'med

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AMINADAV ALONI MUSIC FOUNDATION
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To ensure that the musical legacy of Aminadav Aloni lives on to bring joy and enrichment to future generations.

This past August Aminadav Aloni succumbed after a long battle with cancer. For over 30 years his music had enriched the congregation of Valley Beth Shalom, where he served as music director and composer in residence, and other congregations around the world. Ami was a quiet, modest person, but his life and accomplishments were truly remarkable.

The great success of his music is attributable to an unusual blending of talents. He was a superb classical pianist, teacher and classical musicologist, a remarkably creative jazz artist and a highly skilled arranger and conductor. His Jewish heritage gave him a profound understanding of Jewish liturgy and great familiarity with the sacred texts; his devotion to Hebrew literature, classic and modern, prose and poetry, was limitless. His English lyrics reflect his gift of language even beyond his native tongue. All of this emerged in his impeccable, daring and sometimes outrageous musical writing, full of light, wit, dance and poignancy.

His music for Hallel, the Torah Service, Shabbat, High Holidays, and Yizkor among others have become integral parts of services in synagogues around the world. Ami wrote over one hundred works of Jewish music, including many complete services, songs and prayers commissioned by synagogues, cantors and individuals.

In Ami's last days he expressed his concern with immortality. As Rabbi Schulweis expressed it, Ami's immortality of influence is inextricably bound up with his music, music that has already penetrated the life of many synagogues and which is destined to inspire future generations.

The *AMINADAV ALONI MUSIC FOUNDATION* has been established to gather and publish the vast treasure of Ami's repertoire to ensure that his musical legacy lives on to bring joy and enrichment to future generations. Immortality requires a respectful community and all our lives are entwined with that sacred goal.

For any questions contact: Nicole Aloni
34062-A El Encanto Ave, Dana Point, CA 92629
949-443-9859, fax 443-0859
email, lagbche@aol.com

NOTE:

To address the complete cataloging of his works we are asking everyone who may have tapes of Ami Aloni's music (informal conferences, workshops, local performances and so on) to forward them to Nicole.



Hammond 2-for-1 Split Proposed

The Hammond Organ Company directors voted a 100% common stock distribution subject to stockholder authorization of additional shares at a meeting held in Chicago, February 11.

The board also declared a regular dividend of 50¢ a share and an extra of 50¢, bringing total dividends declared in the fiscal year ending March 31, 1960; to \$1.25 a share against \$2.30 in the prior fiscal year. Both cash dividends are payable March 10 to stockholders of record February 25.

In addition the directors declared the regular quarterly dividend of 50¢ a share on present shares payable June 10, 1960 to stockholders of record May 25.

An amendment to increase authorized common shares to effect the 100% stock distribution will be submitted to stockholders at their annual meeting, May 23 in Chicago.

Hammond has 1,498,816 shares outstanding. Par value per share would remain at \$1.00. Added shares, if approved by stock-

holders, will be distributed June 10 to stockholders of record May 25.

Commented Hammond President Stanley M. Sorensen: "This is healthy for both shareholder and company."

Guitar Sales High

According to an estimate by the American Music Conference, Guitar sales for 1959 reached the 24 million mark continuing an increasingly high trend during recent years.

In 1957 18.5 million total sales was reported; in 1958 it was 20.5 million.

This is but one more indication that this healthy period for sales encompasses the great majority of musical instruments.

When you look at the board of a modern piano, the same, the appearance of today's domestic pianos. No longer do they come from elephant tusks, and the black keys aren't cut from highly-prized Asian or African ebony trees. Both are made of plastic!

A Lockport, N. Y. compression and injection plastics molder has recently developed a process that replaces the usual high lustre, high gloss reflecting surfaces of black phenolic parts with a rich-looking satin lustre that is almost indistinguishable from ebony.

Norton Laboratories has found several diversified applications for its new matte finish technique. Some of these include knobs for high quality table and floor lamps; the satin finish reduces glare and minimizes the presence of dirt and finger marks, which are more noticeable on high gloss finishes. Cameras, which require non-glare, non-reflecting interior surfaces to avoid spoiling light-sensitive photograph film, have proven ideally adapted to Norton's process.

Norton states that because of its rich looking quality appearance, matte finishing often adds a desirable sales feature and, as is the case of black piano keys, can make domestic plastic part resemble a costlier piece of imported wood.

Sales Manager Top Concert Pianist



AMI ALONI, the sales manager for David L. Abell Pianos in Los Angeles will give a concert in the Wilshire Ebell Theatre, Los Angeles, March 20. Aloni, born in Tel Aviv, Israel combines his fine artistic ability with a business career, gives concerts in both Israel and the United States.

Major Expansion of Marketing Development Program Announced by Zenith

Zenith Sales Corporation (newly formed subsidiary of Zenith Radio Corporation) will devote a major portion of its 1960 marketing effort to helping Zenith's wholesale distributors expand their program of dealer assistance.

Announcement was made by L. C. Truesdell, president of Zenith Sales Corporation, who said that the marketing program is designed to help the retail dealer compete effectively under present and changing market conditions, and to sell Zenith products in the most efficient and profitable manner.

Headheading the program is an expansion of the marketing development department led by J. B. (Kip) Anger, Zenith executive whose experience in retail and wholesaling dates back to pre-war days.

The department will be staffed by eight carefully selected field representatives. Each, Truesdell said, has come up through retail and distribution sales organizations. Many of them have worked closely with retailers,



THEATRE ARTS COMMITTEE

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PREMIERE CONCERT
OF
VALLEY BETH SHALOM SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA

IN THE MUSIC OF

AMINADAV ALONI

CONDUCTED BY THE COMPOSER

WITH

SPECIAL GUEST ARTIST, HAROLD J. STONE
IN TRIBUTE TO RUSSIAN JEWRY IN READINGS
OF JEWISH POETS

Sunday, November 5, 1972 8 P.M.

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8:00 o'clock

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accompanied by String Quartet**



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Professional and Congregational Choirs

This program is partially sponsored by the Endowment Fund

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AMI ALONI

Composer, Arranger, Conductor



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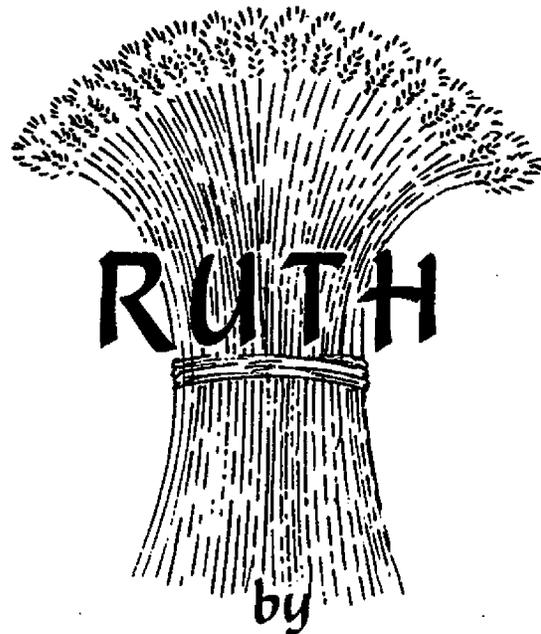
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by
Aminadav Aloni

June 6, 1986

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(A Festival of Song)

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ASCAP listing of Aloni's Commercial Compositions

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Performers:
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(Title Code: 330463235)

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(Title Code: 330273968)

Performers:

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(Title Code: 330314682)

Performers:

(none found)

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Writers:

ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 330299217)

Performers:

(none found)

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Performers:

(none found)

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(none found)

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(none found)

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LAGUNA BEACH , CA, 92677

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Writers:
ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 350169838)

Performers:
(none found)
Publishers/Administrators:
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LAGUNA BEACH, CA, 92677
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ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 358030169)

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22155 PASO DEL SUR
LAGUNA BEACH, CA, 92677
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Writers:
ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 350146666)

Performers:
(none found)
Publishers/Administrators:
AMI ALONI INC
22155 PASO DEL SUR
LAGUNA BEACH, CA, 92677
(714) 499-4222

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ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 358026236)

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(none found)
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22155 PASO DEL SUR
LAGUNA BEACH, CA, 92677
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ALONI AMINADAV

(Title Code: 358027119)

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