UNIT 9

APPENDIX

סיפורי מוסיקה

STORIES OF MUSIC

A PROGRAM OF THE LOWELL MILKEN FUND FOR AMERICAN JEWISH MUSIC
AT THE UCLA HERB ALPERT SCHOOL OF MUSIC

Gershon Kinsley

"Chaos versus organization" is how Gershon Kingsley once described his overall artistic approach, which he has applied to a diverse array of musical genres. Perceiving his own creative world as one in which "Mozart dances with the Beatles and Carl Jung struggles to reconcile the opposites of our human soul," he has focused equal energy on both secular and religious theatrical or theatrically oriented works. He has also achieved extraordinary success in the commercial field as a composer for radio, television, and motion pictures, earning an Emmy for *New Voices in the Wilderness* as well as two Clio awards—the advertising industry's highest mark of recognition. Indeed, despite numerous major works to his credit, Kingsley is probably still best known to many as the composer of the international hit song "Popcorn," first released in 1969 as part of a Kingsley solo LP album entitled *Music to Moog By*. "I have always been sitting between two chairs in my music," the composer has reflected. "I try to bring classical and pop together."

Born Goetz Gustav Ksinski in Bochum, Germany, Kingsley spent most of his childhood in Berlin, where, when he was sixteen, his response to the increasing persecution after 1933 under the National Socialist regime was to join the Zionist youth movement. He went to a training camp in Hamburg that was at least partially funded by American Zionist organizations, where young idealistic boys and girls were prepared for the tasks of rebuilding a Jewish homeland in Palestine. Following *Kristallnacht (Reichskristallnacht)*, the national pogrom throughout the Third Reich on 9 November 1938, he went with a group of fifty young veterans chosen from the Hamburg Zionist youth camp to begin a new life in Palestine. This group was on one of the last sealed trains from Berlin to Italy, from where they sailed for Haifa. Kingsley's parents tried unsuccessfully to obtain visas for themselves for the United States, and eventually they found their way there only via Cuba and various South American ports.

Under the sponsorship of an American Jewish foundation, Kingsley spent two years on a Labor Zionist kibbutz, where, in addition to working the fields and learning agriculture, he taught himself to play piano and began studying orchestral scores he had brought from Germany. As his musical interests solidified and he sought more formal instruction with a view toward professional goals, he decided to abandon the kibbutz, and he left on his own for Jerusalem. There, sometimes interrupted by auxiliary military service that included guarding against Arab marauders at another kibbutz, he studied at a conservatory. He also played jazz in Tel Aviv and Jerusalem in a band with four Arab musicians. In 1946, he emigrated to the United States and, after a short stay in New York, went to Los Angeles, where his first employment was as an

organist in a Reform synagogue. "They asked me to write a small liturgical setting—for *bar'khu or sh'ma*," he recalled more than fifty years later, "so I became a 'Jewish composer' by default!" That was the first of his many liturgical compositions. Meanwhile, he earned a degree from the Los Angeles Conservatory (now the California Institute of Arts), performed in supper clubs, and began conducting for summer stock theater productions. He went on to establish himself as a theatrical conductor, eventually directing music for the Joffrey Ballet, for Josephine Baker, for the highly acclaimed television special *The World of Kurt Weill* starring Lotte Lenya, and for a number of Broadway shows. As a staff arranger for Vanguard Records, he arranged and orchestrated for major artists, including Jan Peerce, who engaged him as his accompanist for American and European concert tours.

In 1948, Kingsley spent a summer in residence at the Brandeis Arts Institute (a division of the Brandeis Camp Institute), in Santa Susana, California, where the music director was the esteemed and charismatic choral conductor and composer Max Helfman (1901–63), one of the seminal figures in Jewish music in America. The program there provided a rich and exciting forum for Jewish arts by bringing established Jewish musicians, dancers, and other artists of that period together with college-age students in an effort to broaden their creative horizons in the context of contemporary Jewish expression. Young musicians, for example, were able to benefit from interaction with such composers as Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Julius Chajes, Eric Zeisl, and Heinrich Schalit. New artistic possibilities that Kingsley had encountered in Palestine—inherent in the modern Jewish cultural consciousness ignited by the Zionist ideal and its enterprise of national restoration and rejuvenation—were expanded and reinforced for him. Among other students in residence during the institute's five-year existence were such future distinguished composers as Yehudi Wyner, Charles Davidson, Jack Gottlieb, Simon Sargon, and Ray Smolover—all of whom have acknowledged the powerful impact of that experience. Like so many other alumni of the Arts Institute as well as the camp, Kingsley has always credited Helfman with exerting a lasting influence on his own musical course and with inspiring him to explore the aesthetic as well as dramatic possibilities of the Hebrew language.

In the late 1960s, encouraged by that period's nearly rebellious road to the relaxation of traditional formal expectations and restraints, as well as by the heightened sense of receptivity to vibrations of contemporaneous youth-oriented popular culture that the political and social climate of the '60s fostered in some American synagogue circles, Kingsley began to devote serious attention to expanding the boundaries of synagogue music. He became widely recognized for his use of contemporary popular and even quasi-commercial idioms in liturgical contexts, and his name became linked—perhaps disproportionately—to the then experimental

and revolutionary reliance on synthesized electronic sounds in the search for new modes of expression in Jewish worship. In addition to the liturgical works included in the Milken Archive, he has written many other sacred and quasi-sacred works, some of which he characterizes as "scenic cantatas." Among these are *A Prophet's Song of Love; What Is Man?; Simcha; Friday of Thanksgiving; They Never Had a Chance to Live*, a Holocaust-related dramatic musical presentation based on the poetry of a young Jewess whose murder in a concentration camp at the age of eighteen represents in this work the one million Jewish children slaughtered by the Germans; *The Fifth Cup*, a staged Passover seder that has been broadcast nationally, in which the ritual foods are represented by corresponding songs; *The Flood According to Ham*; and *The Letter to the Russian Pharaohs*, an interpretation of a Sabbath eve service from modern Israeli-Hassidic perspectives. His popular choral anthem *Shepherd Me, Lord* (with lyrics by a cantor) generated nearly two million sheet music sales to southern Baptist congregational choirs, who were attracted to its gospel style.

Kingsley's increasing immersion in synthesized music dates coincidentally to the 1960s as well, when he became enchanted with the intriguing array of seemingly endless fresh aural possibilities of the new electronic medium, and with the unprecedented degree of control it appeared to afford composers. Electronic music—which should be understood as a technical tool and an expressive medium, as well as a technique, but neither as a genre nor as any specific musical type or style—refers both to electronically generated and acoustic sounds (whether from musical instruments, from nature, or from any other nonelectronic sound source) that are collected and then modified and manipulated electronically. These sounds are assembled into an ordered sonic format by means of magnetic tape or, more commonly today, with computer editing software. The resulting piece can be offered to its audience either in fixed prerecorded mode or by live performance (for example, on programmed modules, keyboards, or computers). In either mode, the electronically synthesized or manipulated sounds can, if the composer chooses, also occur in combination with unmanipulated traditional musical instruments. In principle, electronic music can embrace all genres or types—commercial, popular, or "classical" art music.

In 1966, Kingsley was introduced to tape splicing and looping techniques by the French composer Jean-Jacques Perrey, and they collaborated on an experimental album entitled *The In Sound from the Way Out*, which combined those techniques and sounds with others produced by live studio musicians. The album scored an immediate success with the advertising industry. Kingsley acquired one of the first commercially available and now legendary Moog synthesizers, designed by Robert Moog in collaboration with composers Herbert A. Deutsch

and Walter Carlos. "It looked like a telephone switchboard," Kingsley later reminisced, "and I got hooked on it; I had to get to know it." The album, *Kaleidoscopic Visions*, which exposed the potential of the Moog synthesizer, contained one of Kingsley's earliest electronic pieces, *Baroque Hoedown*, which is still featured as part of the accompaniment for the Main Street Electrical Parade at Disneyland and Disney theme parks. By the late 1960s, following the success of Carlos's LP recording *Switched on Bach*, which was recorded completely with the use of Moog synthesizers, the Moog had already become an important instrument for commercial and commercially popular music, used in the pop world by such celebrities as the Beatles and Mick Jagger. Kingsley made use of it for everything from classical to pop, from commercial jingles to theater and even religious music. During most of the time Kingsley was writing for the Moog, there were probably fewer than 300 synthesizer installations in the United States. He came to view electronic music as the "bridge between 'serious' and 'nonserious' music," and in 1970 he founded the First Moog Quartet—a four-keyboard ensemble. That same year, it gave the first-ever live electronic music concert at Carnegie Hall as a full evening, presented by the adventurous impresario Sol Hurok. The program that evening, which Kingsley describes as "from the sublime to the ridiculous," included arrangements for Moog of Rossini's Wind Quartet no. 1, Bach's G-minor fugue from *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, songs of Lennon and McCartney and Simon and Garfunkel—and, of course, the hit "Popcorn," which became the quartet's standard encore number on its national tour of colleges and universities. That Carnegie Hall concert inspired Arthur Fiedler, the conductor of the Boston Pops Orchestra, to commission Kingsley's Concerto Moogo for synthesizer quartet and symphony orchestra, which was premiered at Symphony Hall in Boston in 1971 and televised nationally.

Kingsley was attracted to electronic music not only for the uncharted and potentially infinite territory of its new sonic world, nor merely for its newness or its place in the avant-garde, to which he nonetheless aspired. Equally important for him was the control it promised a composer, at least in theory, over the final product heard by an audience. Ideally, this could pertain to all aspects of the actual realization of a composer's ideas and intentions after the completion of a piece "on paper," without having to rely on unrelated or separate performers. He relayed his enthusiasm in a 1970 CBS radio interview with Harry Reasoner:

> For the first time in the history of music, the composer doesn't have to take a backseat to the other arts, in that he can be personally responsible not only for the original idea, but for the final result as well. Instead of going through the process of first conceiving the idea, then orchestrating it, then having it played on an instrument, now a musical work can be created entirely in the studio environment.... With the advent of the

electronic synthesizer, a composer can now function the same way as a painter or a sculptor.

Until the 1990s, Kingsley worked extensively with the Munich Radio Orchestra (Munchner Rundfunkorchester) and other European and American orchestras. At the same time, he continued to produce a number of major musical-dramatic works for American audiences. His operatic musical *Cristobal*, written to commemorate the 500th anniversary of Columbus's voyage to the New World, was presented at New York's Union Square Theatre in 1992; and an opera on the same theme, *Tierra*, was premiered in Munich. In 2004, he completed an opera based on the story of the Swedish diplomat Raoul Wallenberg, who saved thousands of Jewish lives during the Holocaust as a personal mission, only to be abducted, imprisoned, and eventually murdered by the Soviets following the German surrender.

By: Neil W. Levin
https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/gershon-kingsley

Charles Davidson

Charles Davidson is one of the most frequently commissioned composers by synagogues, cantors, and Jewish organizations, as well as by general secular choruses across America. He was one of the first graduates of the Jewish Theological Seminary's Cantors Institute (now the H. L. Miller Cantorial School), where he later also received his doctorate in sacred music and where he has served on the faculty since 1977 (now Nathan Cummings Professor). Early in his career, Cantor Davidson became the music director and conductor of the International Zionist Federation Association Orchestra at the University of Pittsburgh and of the Hadassah Choral Society, and director of the Pittsburgh Contemporary Dance Association. Prior to his formal cantorial training at the seminary, he was a student at the unique Brandeis Arts Institute (a division of the Brandeis Camp Institute) in Santa Susana, California. The program there—under the direction of the conductor and composer Max Helfman—provided a rich and exciting forum for Jewish arts by bringing established Jewish musicians, dancers, and other artists of that period together with college-age students in an effort to broaden their creative horizons in the context of contemporary Jewish expression. Davidson and other future composers of distinction, including Yehudi Wyner and Jack Gottlieb, were able to benefit from the influence and tutelage of distinguished resident artists—among them Julius Chajes, Mario Castelnuovo-Tedesco, Erich Zeisl, and Heinrich Schalit.

Davidson's monumental *I Never Saw Another Butterfly,* a setting of children's poetry from the Terezin concentration camp in Czechoslovakia (where only 100 of the 15,000 imprisoned children survived), is unquestionably his best known and most celebrated work. It has been performed throughout the world (more than 2,500 performances) to consistent critical acclaim and is featured on no fewer than eight commercial recordings. It is also the subject of two award-winning PBS documentaries: *The Journey of Butterfly* and *Butterfly Revisited*. In 1991, following the collapse of the communist regime and the birth of the Czech Republic, it was performed at a special ceremony in the town of Terezin, presided over by the new president, Václav Havel, among other dignitaries, and attended by an audience of Holocaust survivors to mark the fiftieth anniversary of the Germans' creation of the camp and ghetto. Performances followed at Smetana Hall in Prague and the Jesuit Church in Brno.

Davidson is a highly prolific composer and arranger. His catalogue contains more than three hundred works—including dozens of synagogue pieces, songs, choral cantatas, entire services, Psalm settings, musical plays, theatrical children's presentations, instrumental pieces, and a one-act opera based on Isaac Bashevis Singer's story *Gimpel the Fool*. Among the many memorable works in addition to those recorded for the Milken Archive series are *The Trial of Anatole Sharansky*; *Night of Broken Glass*, an oratorio in commemoration of *Kristallnacht*; *Hush of Midnight: An American Selihot Service*; *L'David Mizmor,* a service commissioned by the Park Avenue Synagogue; *Libi B'Mizrach*, a Sephardi synagogue service; and a service in Hassidic style. His oeuvre also includes a number of secular and even non-Jewish holiday choral settings that are performed often by high school and college choirs.

Cantor Davidson is the editor of *Gates of Song*, a collection of congregational melodies and hymns, author of the book *From Szatmar to the New World: Max Wohlberg—American Cantor*, and author of several cantorial textbooks. He served with distinction as *hazzan* of Congregation Adath Jeshurun in Elkins Park, Pennsylvania, from 1966 to 2004

By: Neil W. Levin
https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/charles-davidson/

Jonathan Klein

Brooklyn-born Jonathan Klein grew up in Worcester, Massachusetts, where his father, Rabbi Joseph Klein, was the rabbi at Temple Emanuel—a large Reform congregation there—from 1948 until 1977. The composer's early musical influences were some of the acknowledged jazz greats, and much of his musical education came from listening to the music of such artists as Charlie Parker, Dizzy Gillespie, Miles Davis (especially his collaborations with Gil Evans), and Bill Evans. Klein graduated from Brown University in 1970 and also studied extensively at the Berklee School of Music (the Berklee College of Music since 1970), where he was an associate professor of film scoring until his retirement. Among his other jazz-informed liturgical works—in addition to *Hear, O Israel: A Sabbath Service in Jazz*, which appears in Volume 15—is a jazz cantata, *Of Sacred Times and Seasons*, to a text by Rabbi David Polish.

By: Neil W. Levin
https://www.milkenarchive.org/artists/view/jonathan-klein/

Hear O Israel: A Sabbath Service in Jazz

Jonathan Klein began experimenting with syntheses of Hebrew liturgy and jazz during the 1960s. "To my sensibilities," he has recalled, "Judaism and jazz seemed to go together quite naturally." In 1965, while he was an active member of the Reform movement's youth organization, NFTY (North American Federation of Temple Youth), *Hear O Israel: A Sabbath Service in Jazz* was performed at Reform synagogues throughout the Northeast by a quintet consisting of Ellen Gould, Debra Miller, Lawrence Breitbord, Alan Sher—all members of the Temple Emanuel branch of NFTY—and Klein himself at the piano. In 1967, he revised the service for a slightly larger ensemble, in which form it was performed a few times and, with NFTY's support, recorded by an all-star jazz ensemble that included a trio with Herbie Hancock on piano, Ron Carter on bass, and Grady Tate on drums. In addition to the written score, the trio improvised on introductions (to *mi khamokha* and to the Torah service), and Herbie Hancock improvised an interlude within what is called—in the classic Reform parlance of the old *Union Prayer Book*—the "Adoration." For a long time the master of that limited-edition recording disappeared from the market. Still, apart from the sections performed by the trio—and despite the participation of other fine jazz musicians in the other sections—Klein felt that the choral singing sounded too "classical" in style and that a more jazz-oriented vocal approach was needed. In 1992, he made yet a third version of the service, in anticipation of the Milken Archive recording, which included two female and

two male singers, two woodwinds, trumpet, flügelhorn, trombone, piano, bass, and drums. These recorded excerpts of the final version and edition (1992), together with the improvisations taken from the 1967 recording, represent the composer's intentions, concept, and artistic vision to his enthusiastic satisfaction. "As a teenager," he reminisced recently, "there were sounds in my head that I just didn't know how to let out and onto paper so that they could be performed. Twenty-five years later, with the help of some fine musicians among Berklee faculty and students, it became possible. There should be a *b'rakha* for being given the chance finally to more or less get something right!"

These recorded excerpts also reflect faithfully the natural affinity Klein perceived in the 1960s between the improvisatory natures of two otherwise distinct art forms: jazz and cantorial tradition. He was particularly intrigued by the idea of continuous creativity in relation to performance. His own thoughts about the work help us better to appreciate it:

> The ritual act of creating this music *during* worship (i.e., improvisation) seemed most appropriate for the Sabbath, when each week, according to Jewish mystical traditions, we re-create the world. While I was not suggesting that this style or mode replace *nusach hat'filla* [the traditional Ashkenazi prayer modes] as the main musical diet for Jewish worship, I did feel that its occasional use added a unique spirituality to the worship service.

Klein saw jazz improvisation's potential as a spiritual act, in as much as individual performers have the opportunity to create something on the spot, ad libitum. They are thus able to express inner thoughts and feelings while at the same time relating to a supporting ensemble:

> The risks involved—the fact that no two performances are ever exactly the same—can heighten the sense of the moment, and sometimes lead to beautiful artistic expression. I feel the job of the composer in this situation is to provide a framework in which this can happen.

Of course, the same observation about the uniqueness of each performance could—and should—apply equally to traditional cantorial art, which is highly improvisatory by nature. The two vocal styles, timbres, and modalities, however, differ radically from each other. Klein describes the vocal style in his work as that of a mainstream modern jazz vocal group "somewhere between 1948 and the present." The vocal lines are structured like melodies played by the jazz instrumentalists. "These are not melodies one could expect a congregation to sing

or even listen to on a regular basis," he has reflected. "Rather, by being presented with a very personal spiritual experience, a congregant might also feel encouraged to explore his or her personal relationship to prayer. I hope that at least a few listeners can find new appreciation for familiar texts in a different but honest musical setting."

When Klein's service was first performed at his father's congregation in Worcester in 1969, there was, as he has recalled, very little neutral reaction. "The congregants either loved or hated it," and the innovation of using jazz to frame the prayers to which they were accustomed ignited strong reaction. But Klein notes that when the service was performed twenty-five years later at Temple Sinai in Sharon, Massachusetts, it was generally well received—in part because expectations had evolved. By then, "it provided zero shock value."

With the hindsight of more than forty years, Klein still feels that his initial concept—and the rationale behind the combination of jazz and Jewish worship—was valid. But he sees his motivation as more spontaneous than academic. "I was immersed in the vocabulary of jazz at the time. Musically, it was the only language I could speak. To put it simply, this was how the words—including the eloquent English portions of the old Reform *Union Prayer Book*—sang to me." There could, of course, be no more honest motivation from liturgical or artistic perspectives.

ttps://www.tabletmag.com/sections/arts-letters/articles/making-and-remaking-a-jewish-jazz-masterpiece

During winter break of his sophomore year at Brown in 1967, Jonathan Klein traveled to New York with his French horn, baritone sax, and an unusual score he'd written several years earlier.

An aspiring composer and son of a Reform rabbi from Worcester, Massachusetts, Klein had taken a traditional Jewish prayer service—complete with candle blessing, Kiddush, psalmist meditation and the Sh'ma—and set it to jazz tunes, from snappy to bluesy to bossa nova and even modal. Congregations around New England—including his father's—enjoyed his adaptation, and now Klein was getting a chance to record the work, as part of a recruiting effort by the National Federation of Temple Youth to attract new members.

A producer and sound engineer rented a recording studio on East 14th Street in Manhattan. Klein had scant rehearsal time and all of six hours to pull the session together with a pickup band of professional musicians, a pair of female opera singers and the NFTY rabbi, David Davis, to read

the spoken portions in English and Hebrew. There wasn't enough money for a second booking or multiple takes, especially since one of the musicians was getting double the usual union scale. Creative differences flared as the day wore on.

Somehow, NFTY got its album—a 38-minute, nine-cut recording titled *Hear, O Israel*. A few hundred copies were pressed in March 1968 and distributed free to local chapters and shuls as a way of showing Jewish high schoolers that services could be hip—the LP's blurry cover photograph featured a Torah against a tomato-red backdrop, flanked by a trumpet, sax, and French horn. There was virtually no retail distribution or radio airplay; the record didn't carry a catalog number, just a NFTY stamp on the label.

Fifty years later, Klein gets testy when reminded of the project. A commercial and TV composer who taught film scoring at Berklee College of Music until his retirement in 2014, he prefers not to discuss the recording, though given a chance he'll count all the ways it bombed. "The two singers were totally wrong for the job, and whoever transposed the tenor sax part pushed it up an octave too high, which threw the voices off," Klein said from his home in Framingham, Massachusetts, as if recalling a root canal. Mostly he blames himself. "There were amateurish writing mistakes, and the arrangements were weak—it took me years to compose well for vocals. Plus, I never should have performed—my horn sounded flat and didn't mesh with the others. It was a harsh lesson to learn as a student not to play on your own project."

Klein has every right to go hard on his early effort. But for those who've had a chance to hear it, the original was no failure. For despite the bloopers and missed assignments, Klein had one amazing stroke of good fortune in the musicians he landed that day, which rescues *Hear, O Israel* from the scrapheap of jazz vespers. Out front on trumpet and flugelhorn was Thad Jones, member of a prominent jazz family whose brothers were pianist Hank Jones and drummer Elvin Jones; in 1967 Thad was drawing attention for the sassy big band he had recently formed with drummer Mel Lewis; it would soon become one of the biggest acts in jazz. On alto/tenor saxophones and flute was Jerome Richardson, whose credits included recordings with legends Cannonball Adderley, Charles Mingus, Milt Jackson, and Kenny Burrell, along with top singers Sarah Vaughn, Abby Lincoln, Dinah Washington, Betty Carter, and even Harry Belafonte. The rhythm section was anchored by bassist Ron Carter and drummer Grady Tate, two of the steadiest beats in the business, with hundreds of albums between them and long careers ahead.

But the leader of the date—reflected by his double paycheck and extended playing time—was pianist Herbie Hancock. Still a member of Miles Davis' seminal quintet and known for

breakout tunes like "Watermelon Man" and "Maiden Voyage," Hancock was a 27-year-old jazz thoroughbred, perhaps the most in-demand pianist in New York. He'd already had a small string of hit albums under his own name on Blue Note, but was busy freelancing as a sideman for other first-tier labels including Atlantic, Columbia, Verve, A&M, RCA, and Cadet. Having Hancock at the keyboard, with his inventive chord choices, harmonies, solos and rhythmic comping, was guaranteed to produce superior recordings—as it already had for such jazz greats as Freddie Hubbard, Stan Getz, Wayne Shorter, Kenny Dorham, and Donald Byrd. That NFTY was able to secure Hancock and his mates for a private-label album of Jewish liturgical verses cooked up by a no-name college sophomore was a major coup.

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I first became aware of *Hear, O Israel* around 2002, via Fred Cohen, owner of the Jazz Record Center, an invaluable resource for rare and out-of-print recordings housed in a small office building in New York's Chelsea neighborhood. Cohen knew I was a Hancock fanatic and mentioned he could obtain a copy through his pipeline of collectors—this was before eBay and Amazon made anything accessible. Although a prolific performer, Hancock has produced far fewer albums as a leader than his peers—including fellow piano icons Keith Jarrett, Chick Corea, and McCoy Tyner. The idea that he'd headlined a never-released 1960s record of Jewish prayers was riveting, which is why I didn't flinch in coughing up $175 for the pristine LP Cohen sourced. But I no longer owned a turntable, so had to pay another $30 to have the vinyl version converted to CD at Gryphon Used Books on West 72nd Street.

The album did not disappoint—and still doesn't every time it pops up on my iPod. From the opening dance-like "Candle Blessing" to the final up-tempo "Benediction," *Hear, O Israel* is a first-rate modern jazz suite, with inspired source material performed at a high level by some of the finest jazz musicians of the day.

Sure, some of the vocals are garbled and the rabbi's enunciations grandiose—what rabbi's aren't? The pacing is off in a few places, including several abrupt endings. And that French horn solo on "Mi Khamokha"—it sounds distant and sluggish; no wonder Klein winces thinking about it a half-century later. But he's carried along nicely by Hancock, who lifts the entire group with brilliant solos, intros, and chord voicings that would be more widely referenced today if the recording weren't so obscure. A few of the cuts are barely a minute long, which is a shame because they start out with promise. If only Herbie had taken a solo after Jerome Richardson's flute on the spritely "Kiddush."

It's not a stretch to say that *Hear, O Israel* captures a fleeting moment near the end of an era in post-bop jazz, and reveals a small missing link in the career of one of its masters. Within a year after NFTY handed out its scant stash, Hancock would be among the prominent players joining Miles Davis in a Columbia recording studio for the making of *In a Silent Way*, a beacon for a new type of jazz fused with electrified rock that was morphing into funk, disco, soul, and other pop styles that was pushing jazz into more commercial directions. By 1969, Hancock would leave Blue Note for the bigger Warner Bros., using electric keyboards and trying out a variety of unjazzy sounds and polyrhythms that would propel him to superstar status with his 1973 album, *Headhunters*.

But in 1967-68, jazz was still mostly sticking to its side of the street, which limited its popular appeal but also gave so many recordings from those years a stylistic purity that some critics feel represented a kind of heyday. *Hear, O Israel* belongs in that last chapter of the '60s sound typified by Blue Note—a mostly acoustic, small ensemble playing original compositions powered by crisp, straight-ahead rhythms and simple, if clever, arrangements. That everything was wedded to a set of Hebrew prayers only added to its honesty.

It's worth noting that in early March 1968, less than three months after recording *Hear, O Israel*, Hancock went into a Blue Note studio in Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, leading a sextet that included Ron Carter and Thad Jones, to produce one of his greatest albums from that period, *Speak Like a Child*. It was released that summer and became an instant classic, with amazing piano work driving a set of first-rate tunes, including "Riot," "The Sorcerer," Ron Carter's "First Trip," "Toys," and the title track. A side-by-side comparison of the two albums does not diminish *Hear, O Israel*, despite the obvious production differences. Not only does the style of play place each record from the same peak time frame, but there's a similar spontaneity and upbeat feeling to both—it could well be that Hancock carried a bit of Klein's project with him in conceiving the latter album, including an elegiac ensemble piece called "Goodbye to Childhood."

Israel compares favorably to several other religiously-rooted jazz recordings from that era that likewise hold up decades later. One was a 1963 Blue Note album by trumpeter Donald Byrd called *A New Perspective*, paying jazzy tribute to old-time spirituals and gospel hymns. It, too, is enhanced by Hancock on piano, as well as a rousing chorus of Pentecostal singers. The other is a live Episcopal church service captured at San Francisco's Grace Cathedral in 1965—transformed by a trio led by pianist Vince Guaraldi, who shortly thereafter gained lasting fame for scoring the *Peanuts* TV specials. Complete with sounds of coughing and page-turning, as well as a bishop's greeting, invocations of "Christ Our Savior" and a 68-voice children's choir that could have

included Linus and Charlie Brown, Grace Cathedral (Fantasy Records), is also an extraordinary merging of jazz and sacred text. *Hear, O Israel* has a rightful, Jewish place alongside both of these outstanding recordings.

Although the original LP has disappeared even from auction sites, you can buy a CD or even a vinyl version of *Hear, O Israel* online. Credit an enterprising British DJ and promoter called Jonny Trunk (real name Jonathan Benton-Hughes), who swooped in a decade ago and obtained rights to the original 1968 recording from the union—and no, that's not the musicians' union, but the Union of Reform Judaism, NFTY's nonprofit parent. A recent search on Amazon found used copies for $110, while a mint version was selling for $411, reflecting Trunk's shrewd move of keeping supplies limited—his label bills it as "The Secret Herbie Hancock Album." But you can also listen to the whole recording free on YouTube. Trunk switched out the homemade cover for a more modern graphic depicting an illustrated red menorah against a white backdrop because, as he put it kindly, the original sleeve image "is so very terrible."

Someone sent Jonathan Klein a copy of the Trunk reissue a few years ago, though he swears he hasn't cracked the cellophane covering the CD. For him, *Hear, O Israel* wasn't properly realized until he recorded a 1992 redo for the Milken Archive of Jewish Music, which for various reasons was kept under wraps until 2011. That version can also be sampled free on Spotify or YouTube and includes five minutes of Hancock-Carter-Tate trio work from the original spliced into Klein's updated reworking of the prayer service. Not only was that the limit of material that could be used without paying royalties, it was all Klein felt worth salvaging from the 1967 session.

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For Ron Carter, the session may have been just another day in the studio, but that's not to say he approached it with anything less than his usual sense of purpose.

"Every day, on every recording, it's a different band, under a different leader, with different concepts, different keys, and instrumentation," says the 80-year-old Carter, whom Guinness certifies as the world's "most-recorded jazz bassist." Thus, when asked which of the more than 2,200 albums he's made are among his favorites, he answers diplomatically, "Whichever ones they called me to come in for."

In the end, the scale probably tipped and you had an album that was more jazz than Jewish.

But Carter acknowledges that performing with Hancock has always been special, and in the mid-1960s their bond was especially close as part of the Miles Davis group. "Herbie raises the level of music in an instant—that includes me, but also drummers, singers, whoever he's working with. He has the desire and ability to listen and anticipate what comes next, or what *should* come next. He hears the other musicians so that his notes and chord choices and solos are integrated with everyone else. That's a true leader."

That Carter never got to solo on *Israel* doesn't bother him a wit. "I've never been one of those players hanging back behind the palm tree waiting for my spotlight," he told me in a velvety soft voice from his apartment on New York's Upper West Side. "My role has always been to bring a dynamic to the band and to help make the whole group sound like it should and also have fun. I take whatever solos I want in my living room and I always sound great!"

Hearing that the composer has less than a four-star regard for this off-label recording, Carter responded, "That's his honest opinion, but from what I remember the music was well-written and had a lot of movement and changes, which I always appreciate. The singers may not have been jazz-trained but they were right there and added a serious, reverential quality to our work. I remember heading home that day not only feeling that we'd done the job, but we were adding something new to the normal jazz library. In fact, I've given a copy of the recording to some cantors and rabbis I've met to see how they react. They were astonished by the quality of the tunes and the force of the music. So I don't think you can say it wasn't a success."

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There was another key hand at work helping shape *Hear, O Israel*—thanks to composer Charlie Morrow, who was called on to pull the album together. The album's official producer was an Italian-born music publisher named Raoul Ronson, whose company, Seesaw Music Corp., licensed the vocal parts, paid for the studio and contracted with the musicians. But in addition to hiring Ronson and bringing in all the players, Morrow called on another of his contacts to run the soundboard as recording engineer—Jerome Newman.

"Jerry was a legend," said Morrow, speaking recently from the Netherlands between performance projects throughout Europe. No disputing that: While still an undergraduate at Columbia in the 1940s, Newman was known for lugging a portable disk-cutting recorder to Minton's Playhouse in Harlem, where he captured early bebop sets by Charlie Christian, Thelonious Monk, and Charlie Parker. Although he later mastered recordings of flamenco

guitarists, ethnic Greek and Arabic folk tunes, Beethoven symphonies, and Flemish chamber works, Newman, who died in 1970, is best remembered for his jazz output, including studio albums by Ornette Coleman, Eric Dolphy, Pharaoh Sanders, Oscar Pettiford, and others.

"It was Jerry who ensured that the session was 'on brand,' " Morrow said. "A quality recording depends on the lineage and legacy of those at the engineering controls—that's what made all those Blue Note albums so distinctive under the care of Rudy Van Gelder. Jerry likewise knew all the technical aspects within the studio setting needed to create a strong jazz sound.

"Keep in mind," he continued, "because of the cost constraints, this was a straight live-to-stereo recording. There was no multitrack machine, where you could balance the constituent parts in post-production. Every take was the way it was—what you got is what you got. Having Jerry engineer the work was further proof that I always wanted to be the least talented person on set. There are some collectors who would cherish this recording solely on the basis that it was one of Jerry's works."

Still, Morrow considers the session with mixed feelings today. In a musical career loaded with highlights—critically acclaimed rock operas, sound installations, and symphonic works, plus a thriving commercial business that includes film scores (Ken Russell's *Altered States*) and ad jingles for Coke, Hefty Bags, and the famous rat-a-tat-tat percussion track behind WINS radio slogan, "You give us 22 minutes, we'll give you the world"—his total absence from any association with *Hear, O Israel* feels a bit of a slight.

"I never got paid, for one thing," he said. "And you could say there were a few bad feelings that day. Jonathan wanted more creative control and probably felt patronized when Herbie took over his tunes. He wasn't exactly receptive to my ideas and recommendations—we had some dicey moments with the arrangements, and he was struggling, especially with the time limitations we had to work with, so he may have blamed me for any rough patches. I'm certain he faulted me for the singers, who happened to be world-class vocalists—Antonia Lavanne and Phyllis Bryn-Julson. The fact is, as soon as Jerry put Jonathan into the mix, he was going to be dialed back to let the other players do their thing.

"For whatever reason, no one ever reached out to me afterward, not even to share a copy of the album," Morrow added. "I knew it was a unique undertaking based on Jonathan's remarkable idea and this exceptional coming together of talent—but it just never blossomed in my life or became something to add to my CV, even though I was the actual producer."

Prominent Hollywood composer Michael Isaacson, a former NFTY counselor who was present at the original 1967 date, remembers the tension at play in the Stereo Sound studio that day. "Jonathan was definitely in a post-adolescent state," he recalled. "He had his French horn and his baritone sax and wanted to contribute, but frankly, his playing got in the way of some really great jazz.

"I can understand his frustration," Isaacson continued. "Charlie hired two singers who were terrific at opera and new music, and could sight-read any score, but they didn't have a feel for jazz or what Jonathan had in mind for the piece—they were basically singing Hebrew phonetics. Meanwhile, you had these killer musicians who came together for one six-hour project. They'd never seen the material before and were tolerating the prayer verses and the first eight or 16 bars up front so they could get to what they did best. Essentially, Herbie and the others were playing jazz on changes—and that bothered Jonathan. He felt Charlie was mollifying him and there wasn't a proper alignment between one text and another, or with the music. Without question, it's a landmark recording and a noble experiment deserving of a wider audience. But in the end, the scale probably tipped, and you had an album that was more jazz than Jewish, which is OK, but it's not how it was supposed to go."

Rabbi Davis, the former NFTY director who commissioned the album, doesn't see it that way. "Was it a perfect recording?" he asked. "Maybe not. Jonathan zeroed in on the negativity, but he may not have realized what we accomplished. It made a real stir in our community. It got people talking around the country, and it had a lasting impact on many young people and artists." One of those he remembers was the late Debbie Friedman, whose folky reworking of conventional prayers and songs became a staple of many Reform services. "Debbie was a folkie, but she loved our jazz album and said it helped her realize how open the prayer service was to different musical styles and voices," Davis said.

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Klein may have tried to bury any memory of the original recording, but he had continued to tweak his concert piece, at least for a while. In 1969, having graduated from Brown and readying to begin teaching at Berklee, he performed what he calls "Version 2" of the service at Boston's Temple Emanuel.

His group included two Berklee scholarship students who had recently emigrated to the U.S. from the Czech Republic—Jan Hammer on piano and George Mraz on bass, along with young

Berklee alum, drummer Harvey Mason. All three would go on to achieve true jazz stardom. Klein felt he'd improved the work considerably, based on his own further study of arranging and harmony. "That's one I wish we'd recorded," he said wistfully.

Then the demands of a career took over. After a stint at Berklee (where his students included the guitarist John Scofield), he left in 1975, initially to score animated films, among them a popular children's series called *Captain Silas* used in schools and libraries. He had jobs with PBS and joined a cover band, playing keyboards in clubs and at functions around Boston six nights a week, and even appeared on several disco albums. He wrote jingles and incidental music for TV ads selling Raleigh bicycles and Girl Scout cookies, and performed with a fellow Brown alum named Susan Bennett, a sometime jazz singer and commercial voice-over artist who later secured her place in popular culture as the comforting voice of Apple's Siri.

That's the secret success of the re-record—the vocals have real heart and soul, and weren't going through the motions from a score sheet.

He also produced several other Jewish scores, including a piece called "Sacred Times and Seasons" commissioned by a synagogue in Brooklyn, with a woman cantor—not a common fixture at a 1970s shul. (Klein maintains a modest personal website with a sampling of some of his work.)

In 1989, Klein returned to Berklee as an associate professor in film scoring, confident in his chops and starting to think about revisiting the *Israel* service. "I'd learned so much about arranging during those years, even if the basic structure and melodic core of the work was the same," he said. "When Michael Isaacson called me out of the blue in 1992 offering to make a new recording for this new Milken Archive, I felt ready to give it another try. Michael had become a big-deal Hollywood composer. I was excited to take a fresh pass at the work for his new archival project. He'd been present for the earlier record and knew it had defects, so I trusted he'd let me get it right."

This time, Klein would get to call his own shots. He began by creating a Version 3 of the service, with four Berklee-trained singers (two males, two females), double woodwinds and a trombone added for a deeper sound. He reharmonized the vocal parts, adjusted the keys and recruited a full Berklee lineup of musicians, including Michael Rendish, a fellow pianist from the film department, and trumpeter Herb Pomeroy, one of the school's most revered instructors, whom Klein called "the greatest musical influence in my life." And despite being a more polished player,

"I definitely wasn't going to perform on this one," he said.

Taking several months to put the new elements in place—including ample rehearsal time—Klein booked a studio on Boylston Street near Fenway Park in late April to record the group's effort, with Isaacson on hand to gently guide the session.

"I sat in the booth and made some suggestions, but this was basically Jon's baby," Isaacson recalled. "He was mature enough to put his ego aside and place the piece first. And he did an absolutely wonderful job, with people who were well prepared and who worked well together.

"I remember on break saying this was pretty different from Herbie and Thad Jones, but that was the point," he continued. "It was a more coherent, unified work now—the singers had gorgeous diction and knew the Hebrew. To me, that's the secret success of the rerecord—the vocals have real heart and soul, and weren't going through the motions from a score sheet. The whole piece seemed more considered and truer to Jon's original conception of a jazz service that was devout and yet had an improvisational feel. I was proud to have been part of it." (In a side note, Isaacson mentions he forfeited his original copy of *Hear, O Israel*:"I lent it to Jerry Richardson when he was playing on one of my soundtrack recordings in the mid-1970s, and he never gave it back to me!")

The studio do-over could have stood on its own, but sometime later Klein felt a few bits of the original would fit well as segues and intros for the reprise recording. "The Union of Reformed Judaism said we could use about five minutes from the 1968 album without paying licensing fees," he said. "That was plenty to work with, since the parts I thought worth preserving were some of the trio portions with Herbie, Ron, and Grady Tate. We selected four excerpts and wove them in to complete the recording." Even for the untrained ear, it's not hard to detect just where those parts come in—check out opening bars of the "Sh'Ma," "Mi Khamokha," and the finger-popping "Torah Service," as well as the piano solo in "Adoration" to hear Hancock's unmistakable contributions to the Milken Archive, alongside the Jonathan Klein Jazz Ensemble.

Klein never doubted the superiority of the new version. "Everything clicked—the caliber of the players and their interplay with the singers, the pacing, even the keys we chose. And Herb Pomeroy's performance—every note was perfect," he said. "I could finally stand to listen to it."

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I knew from previous attempts to speak with Herbie Hancock about the *Israel* recording that he

had limited memory of the project. Or did he? I began to wonder after receiving a photo Rabbi Davis sent me—a copy of the reissued Trunk CD with a bold greeting autographed across the plastic cover: "*Happy Birthday Rab!! Herbie Hancock*." It seemed that Herbie's "secret album" may not have been so forgotten after all.

Thus, after many weeks of trying to make contact, I was happily surprised to get a call one afternoon in mid-February from Herbie's daughter Jessica, asking if I still wanted to speak with her dad. *Of course, I do!* She cautioned he might not have much to share about the recording—it's been so long, and other people have asked, to no avail.

"Well, I never forgot I *did* the album—even if I don't recall a lot about the session itself," Hancock explained from his office in Hollywood. "I was just doing so much during that period, living in New York, working every day, every week. It was a very important time for me because I was still associated with Miles but also exposed to so many new influences and getting ready to go off on my own. I know the record was for a limited audience, so I never really had a chance to take it in after we made it." As he talked, more lights began to turn on.

"I remember the composer was a young guy, and this was his first time in the studio—and he was very sincere about his work, which included these wonderful opera singers and speaking parts in Hebrew. It was definitely the first and probably only time I ever did a record with a rabbi!" He laughed at the thought. In a few years Hancock would form a lifelong connection to Buddhist chanting, but even at 27, he said, "I felt I was already becoming a spiritual person, and here was this music that was connected to the Jewish faith, and I hadn't experienced anything like that before.

"So even though it may have seemed like a one-off job, I could tell that the work was coming from this young composer's heart and wasn't just another thing to do like many other albums we had lined up back then," he continued. "And I felt it would be a good thing to expose myself to something I wasn't familiar with—that's the only way you can grow as a musician and as a person. I know we were squeezed for time, but I was happy to accommodate this project because it was so different and had a spiritual component. Exploring his music, even for just that one day, I'm sure gave me a slight leg up for the next thing." Indeed, he agreed it could well have carried over to what he was about to do so soon afterward on *Speak Like a Child*. Hancock figures he made a couple of hundred dollars from his effort that December day, unaware of the dividends his performance created for others in years to come.

When I told him that Klein was displeased with the record and its mistakes, Herbie asked how old Klein is now. "Wow, he's almost 70?" asked the pianist, who himself will turn 78 in April and is wrapping a new album, his first in eight years. "Tell Jonathan I said hi, and that maybe he'd want to go back and listen to it once more, with old ears. Sometimes the best parts are in the mistakes. He may feel better about it now."

https://www.milkenarchive.org/music/volumes/view/swing-his-praises/work/hear-o-israel/

John Zorn

By: John Bracket (Grove Music Online)

(*b* New York City, NY, Sept 1, 1953). American composer, improviser, saxophonist, producer, and record label owner. Zorn is the best known composer and performer associated with the "Downtown" scene in New York City's Lower East Side in Manhattan. He has composed works for a variety of ensembles including string quartets, orchestras, chamber ensembles, rock bands, and jazz groups, as well as works for solo instruments, voice, and other instrumental and vocal combinations. His compositions often incorporate elements and techniques from a number of musical genres and traditions such as rock and popular music from all over the world, jazz (particularly the post-bop and free jazz traditions), classical music (especially the music of a number of 20th-century avant-garde composers and movements), improvised music, and film music. Zorn's interest in a variety of avant-garde movements, movies, Judaism and Jewish identity, and occult religious traditions has exerted a powerful influence on his aesthetic of art and composition.

In 1995 Zorn founded a record label, Tzadik, devoted to recording and releasing music, films, and writings by contemporary experimental artists as well as re-releasing previously issued recordings. In 2005 Zorn opened The Stone, a performance space on the Lower East Side catering to experimental musicians. In recognition of his enormous and varied musical accomplishments and his support of experimental artists and musicians through his work with Tzadik and The Stone, Zorn has received numerous honors and awards, including Columbia University's School of the Arts William Schuman Award (2007) and the MacArthur Foundation's "genius" Grant (2006).

1. Childhood through the game pieces.

As a child growing up New York City in the borough of Queens, Zorn attended the United

Nations School in Manhattan, where he played piano, guitar, bass, clarinet, tuba, and trombone. During this time, Zorn began composing his own music and organized concerts with his classmate, the composer Stephen Hartke. After graduating, Zorn enrolled in Webster College (St. Louis, Missouri) where he studied composition with Kendall Stallings and began research for a planned thesis on the music of Carl Stalling, the composer of cartoon music for Warner Brothers. In St. Louis, Zorn also started playing alto saxophone and his interests in composition and improvisation were fueled by musicians and music associated with the Black Artist Group (BAG)—notably Oliver Lake and Julius Hemphill—and the Chicago-based Association for the Advancement of Creative Musicians (AACM) and musicians such as Anthony Braxton and Wadada Leo Smith. Zorn left Webster after a year and half and, following a short stay in California, returned to New York City in 1975, where he staged solo performances in his apartment that combined music and sculpture presented under the name "Theater of Musical Optics."
In New York, Zorn met a number of musicians interested in improvisation, including the guitarist Eugene Chadbourne, violinist Polly Bradfield, trombonist George Lewis, and keyboardist Anthony Coleman. Drawing upon his interest in the music of Earle Brown, John Cage, and Cornelius Cardew, as well as the music of artists associated with BAG and AACM, Zorn created a series of works known as game pieces. In these, a group of improvisers operate within a structured compositional environment yet are free to interpret and realize these rules according to their own strengths and abilities. In works such as Lacrosse (1977) and Archery (1979), performers improvise according to a predetermined timeline based upon all of the available instrumental combinations. When all of the combinations are exhausted, the piece ends. In Fencing (1978), performers improvise according to particular musical genres or styles that are superimposed upon one another based on the performing forces, a technique Zorn relates to the music of Charles Ives. In Pool and Archery (both from 1979), Zorn abandons the principle of a timeline, replacing it with a prompter who dictates the available instrumental combinations during the course of the performance. Locus Solus (1983) applies the principles of his game pieces to a rock band format. Cobra (1984), Zorn's most well-known game piece, builds upon and develops many of the ideas explored in his earlier game pieces. In Cobra, however, the improvisers take a more active role in the performance by requesting a variety of instrumental combinations and sound events according to a set of hand cues that are first directed to the prompter who then relays them to the entire ensemble.

Zorn continued to write game pieces through the late 1980s. Works like Xu Feng (1985) and Hu Die (1986) introduce "sound modifiers" that restrict certain musical parameters available to the improvisers (modifiers such as "high," "low," "loud," or "soft"). Bézique (1989), Zorn's last game piece, extends the idea of the modifier to include musical styles and genres. In Bézique,

the performers also act as composers by arranging and then improvising a piece in a particular musical genre or style (available style modifiers include jazz, rock, blues, classical, and ethnic). The succession of musical genres heard during a performance of Bézique can be traced to Zorn's long-standing interest in what he calls "changing blocks of sound," a quality and process he often relates to cartoon music and certain works by Igor Stravinsky. This feature of Zorn's approach to composition is also prevalent in other works he was composing during the 1980s, notably his file card pieces, concert music, and his music for bands, especially Naked City.

Throughout the 1980s, Zorn released a number of recordings that highlight his talents as an improviser in both solo and group settings. The Classic Guide to Strategy, Volume 1 (1983) and Volume 2 (1986) features Zorn's solo free improvisations on saxophones, clarinets, mouthpieces, and birdcalls. Yankees (1983) is a recording of group improvisations featuring Zorn, trombonist George Lewis, and the legendary British guitarist, Derek Bailey. News for Lulu (1988) includes interpretations of jazz tunes originally written by Kenny Dorham, Hank Mobley, Freddie Redd, and Sonny Clark and performed by Zorn, Lewis, and guitarist Bill Frisell.

2. File card pieces through Naked City.

Zorn's music has been influenced by a number of musicians, composers, and filmmakers. As a way of honoring some of his influences, Zorn arranged and recorded a number of tribute pieces in the 1980s, including Shuffle Boil (1984, arrangements of music by Thelonious Monk), Der kleine Lieutenant des lieben Gottes (1985, Kurt Weill), and Two-Lane Highway (1987, guitarist Albert Collins). Spy vs. Spy (1989) is an album of arrangements of songs by Ornette Coleman performed in a thrash metal style by Zorn and Tim Berne on saxophones, Mark Dresser on bass, and Joey Baron and Michael Vatcher on drums. The Big Gundown (1986) includes arrangements of music by the legendary film composer, Ennio Morricone. The success of The Big Gundown introduced Zorn to a larger audience and also attracted the attention of Elektra/Nonesuch who offered Zorn a recording deal in the late 1980s.

While Zorn was recording many of his albums of arrangements and tributes, he began to adopt a method of composing utilizing file cards. In his file card pieces, the changing blocks of sound events realized in performances of the game are planned in advance according to a specific narrative or dramatic subject, such as the films of Jean-Luc Godard in Godard (1985), the detective novels of Mike Hammer in Spillane (1986), or the Japanese actor Ishihara Yujiro in Forbidden Fruit (1987). The individual index cards might contain specific musical instructions, including mood, musical style, instrumentation, chord progressions, or melodies. After settling upon a satisfactory ordering of the file cards, a group of performers—many of whom also played

on Zorn's game pieces—would rehearse and record the individual file cards in the recording studio. Unlike Zorn's earliest recordings that capture a single performance of a particular game piece or free improvisation, the recording of a file card piece assumes the role of the "work." Zorn adapted his file card technique in a number of works composed for solo performers and small ensembles. Cat O' Nine Tails (1988) was commissioned by the Kronos Quartet and is a notated file card piece (Zorn originally wrote out each file card, arranged them, and then wrote them on staff paper). The score to Cat O' Nine Tails is arranged as a series of sound blocks identified as noise, cartoon sounds, sound improvisations, and sections of collage that include quotations from composers such as Charles Ives, Iannis Xenakis, and Elliott Carter. Other notated file card pieces include Carny (1991), a work for solo piano commissioned by Stephen Drury, and Angelus Novus (1993), a chamber work commissioned by the Netherlands Wind Ensemble.

The music created for the band Naked City is the culmination of many of Zorn's compositional techniques and artistic influences, including the juxtaposition of musical styles heard in his later game pieces, the pacing and organization of his file card compositions, his fascination with hardcore music punk, and his interest in Japanese culture, art, and music (Zorn spent half of the year in Japan from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s). Conceived as a compositional workshop for a rock band, Naked City features Zorn on alto saxophone, Bill Frisell on guitar, Fred Frith on bass, Wayne Horvitz on keyboards, Joey Baron on drums, and vocalist Yamatsuka Eye. The band's eponymous release of 1990 includes original compositions by Zorn as well as arrangements of music by film composers such as Morricone, Henry Mancini, and John Barry. Torture Garden (1989) is a collection of the band's "hardcore miniatures" (short and extremely fast songs inspired by punk and hardcore music) while Grand Guignol (1990) includes arrangements of works by Claude Debussy, Charles Ives, Alexander Scriabin, and Orlando di Lassus. The tracks on Absinthe (1993), Naked City's final studio recording, explore ambient and noise textures that resemble the file card composition Elegy (1992, for Jean Genet) and the works that appear on the recordings Redbird (1995) and Duras:Duchamp (1997). Outside of Naked City, projects such as Painkiller and Slan provided Zorn with still more performing and composing opportunities in a rock band format.

The cinematic qualities and expressive pacing of Zorn's music drew the attention of number of independent and documentary filmmakers. With the success of compositions and recordings like Spillane and The Big Gundown, Zorn began to write music for films, television specials, and cartoons in the mid-1980s. Zorn's earliest film scores (released on Filmworks: 1986–1990) includes music for director Rob Schwebber's White and Lazy (1986), Sheila McLaughlin's She

Must Be Seeing Things (1986), Raul Ruiz's The Golden Boat (1990), and an arrangement of Ennio Morricone's title sequence from The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly featuring members of Naked City. Zorn's film scores are written for a variety of instrumental combinations in a number of musical styles. Cynical Hysterie Hour (1990) was written to accompany four short films by the Japanese cartoonist Kiriko Kubo and features banjo, guitars, harp, and sound effects provided by keyboard player Wayne Horvitz and turntable performer, Christian Marclay.

3. Radical Jewish culture and concert music.

In September 1992, Zorn was asked to curate the Art Projekt Festival in Munich, Germany where he introduced audiences to his latest project: "Radical New Jewish Music." Now called the "Festival for Radical New Jewish Music," the Munich festival included performances of works by a number of Downtown composers (including Zorn, Gary Lucas, and Anthony Coleman) that explored issues relating to Jewish identity, heritage, history, and musical traditions and practices. In their program notes, Zorn and guitarist Marc Ribot describe the "radical" qualities of the "Jewish music" performed during the festival:

In preparing this program, Jewish music has been defined broadly as a "music made by Jews," rather than limiting the scope to music employing Hebraic scales or covering Jewish themes. The participants come from a wide range of backgrounds. Most are highly secularized, some completely non–religious. For many the term "radical" could be used to describe their stance within the mainstream Jewish community as well as their relationship to mainstream culture.

Zorn's chamber work Kristallnacht was performed in Munich and again in April 1993 when the festival was reprised in New York City at the famed club for experimental music, The Knitting Factory. Taking its name from the pogroms that took place in Germany and Austria in November 1938, Kristallnacht explores the Jewish experience in the 20th century over the course of seven movements, from the klezmer-influenced "Shtetl (Ghetto Life)" to the overdriven guitar and percussion improvisations of "Garin (Nucleus – The New Settlement)." The movement "Never Again" contains high frequency samples of shattering glass that represent the "Night of Broken Glass" and that can cause physical pain for listeners (a warning from the composer on the CD release advises against "prolonged or repeated listenings").

Building upon the success and interest generated by the performances in Munich and New York, many Downtown musicians and composers began to write music and organize performing ensembles under the banner of "Radical Jewish Culture." In 1993, Zorn began to create a book of melodies based upon one of two Jewish synagogue modes and that could be performed by a

variety of ensembles. By 1994, Zorn had composed over two hundred pieces that were collected together under the name "Masada songbook." Masada—a piano-less quartet in the tradition of Ornette Coleman—featuring Zorn on saxophone, Dave Douglas on trumpet, Greg Cohen on bass, and Joey Baron on drums, released ten recordings of songs drawn from the Masada songbook between 1994 and 1997. Along with the Masada quartet, Zorn has organized a number of other ensembles dedicated to performing and recording tunes from the Masada Songbook, including Electric Masada, the Masada String Trio, and Bar Kokhba (chamber arrangements for strings, keyboards, and clarinets).

Beginning with the string quartet Memento Mori (1992), Zorn began to employ a variety of formal systems and techniques when composing his concert music. In their rigorous pre-compositional plans and structural complexity, Zorn's recent concert music resembles the practices of many 20th-century composers such as Schoenberg or Alban Berg. In many of his concert pieces, Zorn borrows and manipulates pitches, rhythms, chords, and other musical material from works by other composers. The pitch material of Aporias (1995), for example, is based upon Igor Stravinsky's Requiem Canticles while Rituals (1998) draws its pitch material from Karlheinz Stockhausen's Kontrapunkt. Works such as Le Môm̂o for violin and piano (1999) and Contes de Fées for violin soloist and orchestra (1999) are based entirely upon complex and lengthy canons. Since 2002, much of Zorn's recent concert music reflects his interest in the occult and various forms of mysticism, especially the thought of Aleister Crowley. IAO (2002) is a studio composition based upon number symbolisms drawn from the occult writings of Crowley and mystical Judaism (Kabbalah). Similar techniques are utilized in Goetia for solo violin (2002), the string quartet Necronomicon (2003), and 777 for three cellos (2007).

4. Legacy.

Zorn has been a fixture on New York's Lower East Side Downtown scene for nearly 40 years and he continues to write, perform, and record music at a staggering pace. Zorn has recently returned to the method of file card composition in his works Femina (2009) and Interzone (2010) and has created music for a number of band projects such as the Crowley-inspired Moonchild and The Dreamers. In 2004, Zorn created a second book of melodies for his Masada project, "The Book of Angels," that have since been performed and recorded by various solo performers and ensembles such as the pianist Uri Caine and The Cracow Klezmer Band. In 2009, Zorn collaborated with the legendary American theater director and playwright, Richard Foreman, on the production Astronome: A Night at the Opera presented at Foreman's Ontologic-Hysteric Theater.

Although Zorn's extreme and varied artistic interests have sometimes caused controversy, he has never compromised his artistic vision or his commitment to expanding musical boundaries. Zorn is a tireless proponent of experimental music, composers, musicians, and art. Through his record label, Tzadik, and the performance space, The Stone, Zorn provides opportunities for many established and younger composers and musicians to help ensure that the Downtown scene will continue to be a vibrant center for experimental music and art for many years to come.

https://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/grovemusic/view/10.1093/gmo/9781561592630.001.0001/omo-9781561592630-e-1002225901

Steven Bernstein

Trumpeter/composer/bandleader Steven Bernstein may have made his name with groups as far-flung as Sex Mob and the Lounge Lizards, but it is quite possible that his most enduring work, the effort that will be most remembered when people look back at a long and fruitful career, is his series of Diaspora recordings on John Zorn's Tzadik label and its Radical Jewish Culture imprint. By taking traditional Jewish music and reworking it in a variety of contexts, Bernstein has demonstrated just how malleable the music is. From the Cuban and soul inflections of *Diaspora Soul* ('99) to the blues-informed but never obvious *Diaspora Blues* ('02) to his latest release, the West Coast cool influence of *Diaspora Hollywood* ('04), Bernstein demonstrates that music is truly universal, and can be moulded and shaped an infinite number of ways to make music that is both timely and timeless. Bernstein explains it best in his liner notes to Diaspora Soul : "When John Zorn asked me to make a record for the Radical Jewish Culture series, I was left with an enigmatic question. How does a Jewish musician who has spent his life studying 'other' musical cultures make a 'Jewish' record? How does one make a 'Jewish' record when, by nature, all of one's music is already Jewish?"

The answer was simple: just follow one's musical instincts. "All of my records," says Bernstein, "are an actual 'record' of an event, a snapshot of my music at that moment, with those particular musicians in that particular space." So, rather than looking too hard, being too considered, Bernstein simply followed his impulses and looked to approach a more traditional Jewish songbook with whatever interests he happened to be engaged in at that particular point in time.

At the time of *Diaspora Soul* Bernstein had been thinking about the sound of three tenor saxophones and a baritone. "I call it the Little Richard sound," explains Bernstein, "you see that

set-up in early pictures of his band." But equally, Bernstein had been studying New Orleans music, and how it developed into not just jazz as we know it, but rhythm and blues. And how that sound was part of a larger sound that took in the Gulf Coast sound, specifically Texas, Cuba and, of course, Miami, where displaced Jews and Cubans intermingled and were exposed to each others' music.

The resulting record seamlessly blends traditional Jewish hora form with Cuban cha cha, no surprise since the hora's bass pattern is the first half of the clave, which is the root of Afro-Cuban music. From reinterpreting "Manishtana," which are the four questions asked by the youngest child at the Passover Seder, as a New Orleans cha-cha, to the soul-dripped version of "Let My People Go," which features the horn section of Paul Shapiro, Michael Blake and Peter Apfelbaum on tenors, and Briggan Krauss on baritone, as well as Brian Mitchell's Wurlitzer piano, Bernstein manages to blend styles into something that is reverential to all yet creates something refreshingly new. "Roumania, Roumania" features a Jim Keltner-esque drum beat, courtesy of percussionist Roberto Juan Rodriguez, who has been mining his own confluence of Cuban and Jewish traditions on his own Tzadik releases, most notably his recently-released *Baila! Gitano Baila!*. Add Ry Cooder and you just might find a Tex Mex connection in there somewhere. And "Rock of Ages," with its combination of bongo rhythms, Hammond organ and blue notes, takes a popular Chanukah song and refashions it in the spirit of Donny Hathaway.

Diaspora Soul is unquestionably the most approachable of the three disks, with danceable grooves, catchy arrangements and singable melodies abounding. Still, while there was a lot of preparation work involved, there was, as is Bernstein's habit, little to no rehearsal and most of the tracks are first takes. But when it came time to tackle another Diaspora project, Bernstein was characteristically uninterested in repeating past successes. "Each recording represents what I was hearing in my head at the time of the recording," Bernstein says. "It represents the way I wanted to play and write at that time - it fulfilled my need to also *hear* that music; each recording I've made has been a recording that I wanted to *hear* as well as record."

For *Diaspora Blues*, Bernstein wanted to "arrange less and play more trumpet, but I was not interested in using a 'New York' rhythm section - I felt there were enough recordings like that. Sex Mob was in Florida doing a double bill with [saxophonist] Sam Rivers, and when I heard his trio play, I *knew* these were the guys I wanted to record with. Sam did it as a favour to me. I never dreamed that Sam would record a whole CD — I was hoping he would guest on one song — but Sam is such a generous artist that he wanted to *play* the *music*.

And so, armed with a band whose approach is considerably more free than the ensemble that recorded *Diaspora Soul*, Bernstein recorded *Diaspora Blues*, which may be somewhat misleading to listeners expecting a more overt blues record, with traditional Jewish music meshed around blues forms. There are *no* straightforward blues forms to be found on the record — although the mood and many of the notes are distinctly blue in tone and ambience.

More playful and improvisational in nature, *Diaspora Blues* finds Bernstein and Rivers enmeshed in collective improvisation, supported by the elastic rhythm section of bassist Doug Matthews and drummer Anthony Cole. That Matthews and Cole also double on bass clarinet and tenor saxophone respectively broadens the sonic palette, including a woodwind/brass quartet version of the traditional prayer "Aveenu Malkenu." Sounding a bit like the World Saxophone Quartet, the piece shifts between strict arrangement and more fluid improv.

Another differentiator between *Diaspora Soul* and *Diaspora Blues* is the amount of writing Bernstein did for the album. Nearly half the material is composed by Bernstein, although in the case of pieces like "Commentary I" and "Commentary II" they are so exploratory that it would appear that Bernstein's contributions are in the form of simple sketches, roadmaps given to the group as jumping-off point for more extended extemporization. Still, between the material composed by Cantor Moshe Koussevitsky, "whose voice, music and spirit guided this project," says Bernstein, the traditional material and Bernstein's own compositions including "Lucky," where Rivers' mellifluous flute drives the entire piece, there is a consistent ambience that is intrinsically darker than the more groove-happy *Diaspora Soul*.

Sitting somewhere between the approachable *Diaspora Soul* and the mysterious *Diaspora Blues*, Bernstein's latest offering, *Diaspora Hollywood* is inspired by, as Bernstein recounts, "listening to Shorty Rogers, Shelly Manne and Jimmy Giuffre. I'd been fascinated by the LA arrangers from the '50s and '60s, I wanted to figure out how they achieved those sounds. I'm lucky to have great friends in LA who are incredible musicians, and I've been waiting to record with [percussionist] Danny [Frankel] and [saxophonist] Pablo [Calogero] in this kind of situation for years, so the ensemble was obvious."

There's a certain film noire aesthetic about the record, which also features D.J. Bonebrake on vibraphone and bassist David Piltch. The material ranges from the rhythmical insistence of Bernstein's "King Kong" to the cooler vibe of "Havenu Shalom Alechum" and Bernstein's "Hollywood Diaspora," with its late-night ambience. Calogero works the bottom range of all his instruments - baritone sax, bass clarinet and bass flute, to create a rich texture that is

reminiscent, not surprisingly, of Gerry Mulligan.

This is music that manages to be both ethereal and rooted at the same time. "Jehudas Bas Zion," with its light funk groove and Calogero's bass clarinet, is ominous yet strangely compelling. "Sim Shalom," with its dark and smoky feel, translates a traditional piece that is more commonly heard at an up-tempo pace into something that could be an outtake from Miles Davis' soundtrack to Ascenseur pour *l'éschafaud*.

What becomes immediately apparent upon sampling the disk aside, Bernstein actually articulates in the liner notes that he quite intentionally combined the improvisational style of *Diaspora Blues* with the more through-composed approach of *Diaspora Soul*, resulting in a heady mix that is the best of both worlds. Consequently, *Diaspora Hollywood* may be the most fully-realized and successful of the three disks and, if there is any justice, will show up on many critics' top ten lists for '04.

Whether or not Bernstein continues with the Diaspora series, there is no question that he has created a trilogy of music that manages to successfully blend Jewish themes, both traditional and inspired, with a variety of musical situations, proving that, indeed, context *is* everything. And that even such seemingly straightforward titles as *Soul*, *Blues* and *Hollywood* can have broader meaning, implications that extend beyond the obvious into more intriguing combinations of music from a variety of sources. Bernstein, with the Diaspora series, has created some of the most memorable music to come from Zorn's Radical Jewish Culture imprint proving, in no uncertain terms, that there is a wealth of possibility in interpreting this music. Far more than mere shtick, fusing music from a variety of cultures only enriches all its sources, and Bernstein's Diaspora series does nothing if not enhancing *all* its reference points.

https://www.allaboutjazz.com/steven-bernstein-evaluating-the-diaspora-series-by-john-kelman.php

Paul Shapiro

Paul Shapiro, saxophonist, flautist, composer and bandleader, has been active in New York's creative music scene for over two decades. Throughout the eighties he led his own avant-funk band Foreign Legion, which was featured on Emergency Records' compilation "This Is The Funk." Paul was a longtime member of Philip Johnston's Microscopic Septet that toured internationally

and recorded for Stash and Osmosis Records.

In the early nineties Paul started to record for many of the new producers of dance music and hip-hop. His most noted work from that period is his song-length flute solo on Frankie Knuckles' "The Whistle Song," which became a top-ten pop hit in the UK, and an international dance club classic. His full-length soprano sax improv can be heard on NuYorican Soul's anthemic "The Nervous Track." He also appeared on albums by Queen Latifah, Naughty By Nature, Marc Anthony and India around that time.

In 1994 Paul became a founding member of Brooklyn Funk Essentials, an international group of instrumentalists, spoken word artists, and rappers, that recorded for RCA and Shanachie Records. The band's second album was recorded in Istanbul , Turkey and combined forces with the Turkish group Laco Tayfa. Paul's composition "Mambo Con Dancehall" from the third album, was released as a single in Europe on PIAS and Dorado.

In 1998 Paul wrote the score to Cheryl Dunye's critically acclaimed film "The Watermelon Woman." Other composition credits include "The Sun Gets Blue" a musical by William Electric Black, and "Presque Isle," a play by Joyce Carol Oates. He has also scored commercial spots for television, most notably David La Chapelle's 'Baby Jane,' for MTV.

In 2003, Paul's first album as a leader entitled "Midnight Minyan" was released on John Zorn's Tzadik Records label. It has been featured in The Jewish Week, The Forward and Hadassah Magazine, and has received many excellent reviews. Will Friedwald in the New York Sun writes, "In 2002, my favorite single track on a CD was Cassandra Wilson singing "Darkness on the Delta" on her album,"Belly of the Sun"; so far this year, Mr. Shapiro's "La Chaim" is the leading contender.

Paul's Midnight Minyan band has performed at Tonic, Makor and the Museum of Jewish Heritage, and has been featured on NPR's "All Things Considered" as well.

As a session musician and/or arranger, Paul appears on albums by Lou Reed, Ben Folds Five, Khaled, Yoko Kanno's Cowboy Bebop, Shudder To Think, Brian McKnight, Snakefarm, Majek Fashek, Towa Tei, M People, Ali, Marshall Crenshaw, Michael Callen, Guru, Arthur Baker, N'Dea Davenport, Joe Claussell, Satoshi Tomiie, Robert Owens, Seedy Arkhestra, Ultra Nate, Sweet Sable and others.

Paul has played on numerous remixes by David Morales, Frankie Knuckles and Little Louie Vega for artists including Janet Jackson, Mariah Carey, Jamiroquai, Mondo Grosso, Lisa Stansfield, Kylie Minogue, Michael Jackson, Alison Limerick, Lalah Hathaway, Denetria Champ, Mica Paris, Monie Love, Yomo and Malkey, Ice T and Loose Ends.

He has performed with Ofra Haza, Aretha Franklin, David Murray, Wayne Horvitz, Searching For Banjo, Craig Harris, Elliot Sharp and Julius Hemphill.

Paul Shapiro grew up in Westbury, Long Island. He has a BA from McGill University, Montreal, Canada.

https://musicians.allaboutjazz.com/paulshapiro

Anthony Coleman

From the Sarajevo Jazz Festival to the Jewish Culture Festival in Krakow, Poland, **Anthony Coleman's** musical odyssey has taken him through many cultures and led him to wear many hats as composer, improvising keyboardist, and teacher. Coleman joined the NEC faculty in 2006, returning to a school where he himself studied in the 1970s, during the birth of NEC's Contemporary Improvisation program (then called Third Stream). In addition to his work as a studio teacher and ensemble coach, Coleman works with NEC's Contemporary Improvisation students to organize a departmental concert each spring.

Commissioners and performers of Coleman's work include clarinetist David Krakauer/Concert Artists Guild (*The Kaspar In Me*, 1985), accordionist Guy Klucevsek (*Below 14th Street/Above 125th Street*, 1987), Relâche (T*he King of Kabay*, 1988), pianist Joseph Kubera (t*he hidden agenda*, 1989), The Crosstown Ensemble (*Latvian Counter-Gambit*, 1992), Neta Pulvermacher and Dancers/Meet The Composer (*Goodbye and Good Luck*, 1993), Bang on a Can All-Stars/Jerome Foundation, (*Mise en Abîme*, 1997), Kitchen House Blend (*Lapidation*, 2002), guitarist Marco Cappelli/Associazione Alessandro Scarlatti (*The Buzzing In My Head*, 2003), TILT Brass Band (*Set Into Motion*, 2005), the Ruhr Triennale (*Dubistmeinichbindein*, 2007), the Brecht Forum (*Artifacts for String Quartet*, 2008), Merkin Concert Hall (*Flat Narrative*, 2008), the Festival Banlieues Blues/Ensemble Erik Satie (*Echoes From Elsewhere*, 2011), ISSUE Project Room/ String Orchestra of Brooklyn (*Empfindsamer*, 2012).

Other key works include the cycle by *Night* (1987–1992), a series of works inspired by Coleman's

experiences in (the ex-) Yugoslavia (CD *Disco by Night*, Avant 1993). Coleman has presented his own work at the Sarajevo Jazz Festival (Bosnia), North Sea Jazz Festival (Holland), Saalfelden Festival (Austria), and the Krakow and Vienna Jewish Culture Festivals.

Ensembles led by Coleman have recorded extensively for Tzadik and include the trio Sephardic Tinge (*Sephardic Tinge*, 1995; Morenica, 1998; *Our Beautiful Garden is Open*, 2002) and *Selfhaters Orchestra* (Selfhaters, 1996; The Abysmal Richness of the Infinite Proximity of the Same, 1998). Coleman has also toured and recorded with John Zorn, Elliott Sharp, Marc Ribot, Shelley Hirsch, Roy Nathanson, and many others.

Coleman has been awarded grants from New York Foundation on the Arts (1988 and 2006), New York State Council on the Arts, and Meet the Composer. He has received residencies from the Yellow Springs Arts Center (1987 and 1990), the Djerassi Colony (1989), the Frei und Hansestadt Kulturbehörde of Hamburg, Germany (2002), and the Civitella Ranieri Center, Umbertide, Italy (2003), the Centro Veneziano di Studi Ebraici Internazionali in collaboration with Venetian Heritage (2011).

Coleman has recorded 13 CDs under his own name, and he has played on more than 100 CDs. His most recent CDs are *The End of Summer* (Tzadik), which features his NEC Ensemble Survivors Breakfast, *Shmutsige Magnaten* (Tzadik), a live solo performance from the 2005 Krakow Jewish Culture Festival that features interpretations of the songs of Mordechai Gebirtig; *Pushy Blueness* (Tzadik) and *Lapidation* (New World), both recordings of his chamber music, and *Freakish: Anthony Coleman Plays Jelly Roll Morton* (Tzadik, 2009). His *Damaged by Sunlight* (2010) was issued on DVD by the French label La Huit.

B.M., New England Conservatory; M.M., Yale University. Studies with Jaki Byard, George Russell, Donald Martino, Malcolm Peyton, David Mott, Jacob Druckman, Betsy Jolas. Participant in Mauricio Kagel's seminar at the Centre Acanthes, Aix-en-Provence, France, 1981.

Additional reading about Anthony Coleman:
https://nmbx.newmusicusa.org/what-made-you-choose-to-express-yourself-through-the-medium-of-klezmer-a-musical-tradition-that-had-long-been-ostensibly-codified-culturallyspecific-and-mostly-forgotten-anthony-coleman/

https://necmusic.edu/faculty/anthony-coleman

Also of interest

"Why are so many jazz musicians from Israel?" Podcast from NPR:
Information and an Excellent podcast on the rise of Israeli Jazz musicians

https://www.npr.org/sections/ablogsupreme/2010/11/19/131451175/why-are-so-many-jazzmusicians-from-israel-these-days