

“American Jewish Liturgical Music: A European Legacy and Beyond”

Sunday 14 July 2019, 7.15-9pm

Oxford Jewish Synagogue  
21 Richmond Road, Oxford OX1 2J

Lecture by:

Professor Mark Kligman, UCLA  
Mickey Katz Endowed Chair in Jewish Music  
Director, Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music

Musical Illustrations:

Rabbi Cantor Gershon Silins, Lead Vocal  
Joyful Company of Singers  
Peter Broadbent, Founder Conductor  
Dr. Alexander Knapp, Accompanist

Program:

Salomon Sulzer “Hine Ma Tov”  
Union Hymnal (1897) “Into the Tomb of Ages Past”  
A.W. Binder “Festival Anthem: Psalm 135” (1962)  
Morris Barash “Un’tane Tokef” (1976)  
Max Helfman “R’tseih” (Published 1991)  
Max Janowski “Avinu Malkeynu” (1967)

Mark Kligman  
University of California, Los Angeles



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For over three hundred and fifty years Jewish Liturgical Music has expressed a variety of experiences. With the largest wave of migrations from Europe in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Ashkenazic synagogue music is based on its region of origins but has moved in new directions. This presentation will trace the European musical influences of Sulzer and Lewandowski to American and the subsequent developments with A. W. Binder, Max Helfman and Max Janowski. One curious point in history is a turn of events in the 1940s, at the end of era of the Golden Age of the Cantorate, where traditional styles are re-interpreted with a heavy influence from Yiddish theatre. American Jewish Liturgical Music is a dynamic and growing expression of prayer.

*Mark Kligman, is the inaugural holder of the Mickey Katz Endowed Chair in Jewish Music and Professor of Ethnomusicology and Musicology at UCLA in the Herb Alpert School of Music. From 1994-2014 he was on the faculty of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion when he taught in the Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music. He specializes in the liturgical traditions of Middle Eastern Jewish communities and various areas of popular Jewish music. He has published on the liturgical music of Syrian Jews in Brooklyn in journals as well as his book *Maqam and Liturgy: Ritual, Music and Aesthetics of Syrian Jews in Brooklyn* (Wayne State University, 2009), which shows the interconnection between the music of Syrian Jews and their cultural way of life. This publication was awarded a 2009 Jordan Schnitzer Book Award Notable Selection, an award of the Association for Jewish Studies. His other publications focus on the intersection of contemporary Jewish life and various liturgical and paraliturgical musical contexts. He is the Academic chair of the Jewish Music Forum and co-editor of the journal *Musica Judaica*. In July 2017 he was named Director of the Lowell Milken Fund for American Jewish Music, a new initiative in the UCLA Herb Alpert School of Music.*



Peter Broadbent  
Joyful Company of Singers  
Founder conductor

Peter Broadbent is the founder conductor of the Joyful Company of Singers and one of Britain's leading choral conductors. He has conducted the London Mozart Players, Divertimenti Chamber Orchestra, the English Chamber Orchestra, the City of London Sinfonia, the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra, the Southern Sinfonia, the Guildford Philharmonic Orchestra, Apollo Voices and the BBC Singers, broadcasting frequently on BBC Radio 3 and Classic FM. Engagements outside the UK include concerts with the Debrecen Philharmonic Orchestra and Kodály Chorus in Hungary, a broadcast with the National Chamber Choir in Dublin and a European tour with the World Youth Choir in 2006. Next year he will make his Bulgarian debut conducting the National Philharmonic Choir in Sofia. He gives workshops and master classes throughout Europe and was the first Director of Training for the Association of British Choral Directors. In 2007 he was presented with the Pro Cultura Hungarica Award by the Hungarian Ministry of Culture for his services to Anglo-Hungarian musical relations, and in 2017 was presented with the Knight's Cross of the Hungarian Order of Merit.



One of Europe's most prominent chamber choirs, the Joyful Company of Singers is known for its virtuosity and intensity of spirit, as well as for an astoundingly wide repertoire, ranging from the 16th Century to the present day, including many first performances. Formed in 1988 by conductor Peter Broadbent, the choir first came to prominence when it won the Sainsbury's Choir of the Year competition in 1990. Since then it has maintained its profile in the music world, winning an impressive list of national and international competitions leading to many invitations to perform. Concert appearances include most of the leading UK festivals and regular concert tours in Europe, broadcasting in many countries as well as on BBC and Classic FM. Most recent tours have included Lithuania and Sweden.

Rabbi Cantor Gershon Sillins  
Lead vocal



Born in Chicago, Illinois, Gershon Sillins received his BA in Music and Philosophy from the University of Illinois at Chicago, and his ordination as cantor and Masters Degree in Sacred Music at the Hebrew Union College-Jewish, Institute of Religion Debbie Friedman School of Sacred Music in New York City. His rabbinic ordination is from Leo Baeck College in London. In North America, Gershon served as cantor of Temple Sinai Congregation of Toronto, ON, and Temple Emanuel in Kensington, MD, among others. He taught cantorial studies at the Abraham Geiger College in Berlin and the Levisson Institute in Amsterdam. He was a founding member of the Washington Monteverdi Singers, a Washington DC based early music ensemble, and sang with many professional choruses, including the Chicago Symphony Chorus and the New York Choral Artists. In his career as an opera and concert singer, Gershon appeared with the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and the Tafelmusik Baroque Orchestra in Toronto. Gershon is a member of the Montagu Centre Rabbinic Team of Liberal Judaism in the United Kingdom. He serves the Norwich Liberal Jewish Community, the Stevenage Liberal Synagogue and the Lincolnshire Liberal Jewish Community.

Alexander Knapp  
Piano



Alex Knapp's set of Four Sephardi Songs (arranged for voice and piano) was published by Transcontinental in New York in 1992; and his Elegy for String Orchestra was published in Jerusalem in 1997. As accompanist to the bass-baritone Mark Glanville, Alex recorded A Yiddish Winterreise, a sequence of 24 Yiddish popular songs, for which he composed eleven arrangements. The CD was brought out by Naxos in 2010. A sequel entitled Di Sheyne Milnerin (a Yiddish "Die Schöne Müllerin"), comprising 20 Jewish love songs (among them, eight arrangements and one original composition by Alex), was recorded on the Nimbus label in September 2012. Alex has more recently composed several devotional songs for voice and piano, and for mixed choir, as well as instrumental chamber works.