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THE MULTIPLICITY OF MUSICAL CREATION

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General Editor

LUCA LÉVI SALA

MUSICAL NETWORKS ACROSS BORDERS
THE MULTIPLICITY OF MUSICAL CREATION

edited by

BELLA BROVER-LUBOVSKY AND IRIT YOUNGERMAN

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PREFACE

THROUGHOUT YEARS OF TEACHING, Jehoash Hirshberg often reminded his students and advisees that «behind every piece of music there is a living person». His attempt to reach out and reveal the human and social layer underlying the broad spectrum of musical repertoires to which he devoted his lengthy career forms the core of the contributions by colleagues, friends, and former students presented here and dedicated in his honour.

Jehoash Hirshberg was born in 1938 in Tel Aviv, then under the British Mandate. He studied violin and music theory at the Academy of Music in Tel Aviv and proceeded to pursue doctoral studies in Musicology at the University of Pennsylvania, where he received his Ph.D. His dissertation, written under the guidance of Norman E. Smith, addresses a subject that, at the time, was still underexplored — the secular music of the late fourteenth century. Throughout his career, while turning to several other fields of research, he maintained his zeal for the delicate charm of late medieval repertoire. Joining the newly founded musicology department at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, he combined his scholarship with other activities aiming to make music widely accessible. From a young age, he published articles about music and musical works in various Hebrew language periodicals; as a professional musicologist he devoted much time and effort to radio broadcasting and lecturing.

A diverse scholar, his academic research spanned several disciplines, of which we bring but a few examples. For Jehoash, Italian Romantic opera has always been a source of endless admiration and scholarly preoccupation, yielding a diversity of creative output, among them four monographs. *Opera in Search of a Just Ruler for a Unified Italy* (Turnhout, Brepols, 2017) addresses the dramatic and ideological complexity of Italian opera during the struggle for national unification and liberation from Austrian rule. During the 1860s, opera was increasingly used as a mouthpiece and a battlefield for Risorgimento, the Italian liberation and unification movement, as the genre as a whole was rapidly turning into a highly political space of social critique. Hirshberg delves into literary sources to explore their musical incarnation in operas by a series of composers, many of whom are unknown not

only to general opera lovers but to scholars as well. He thus turns attention to little studied works by Errico Petrella, Giovanni Bottesini, Agostino Mercuri, Amilcare Ponchielli, Carlo Pedrotti, Francesco Cortesi, Filippo Marchetti, Achile Peri, and Achile Montuoro.

Tragedy and Lieto Fine in Romantic Opera Seria (Turnhout, Brepols, 2019) explores Rossini's *Tancredi* with its two alternative endings (Venice and Ferrara, 1813) as the locus of a broader transition from the conventional *lieto fine* to the heartbreaking endings characteristic of Romantic opera. The book discusses *lieto fine* in operas by Bellini, Donizetti, and Verdi, turning to works by Antonio Cagnoni and to Puccini's *La Fanciulla del West* and *La Rondine*. By combining scholarly research, his attentiveness to forgotten works, and his pursuit of their general popularisation, Jehoash has succeeded in revitalising several obscure operas. Subsequently, new performances of distinct operatic scenes have been included in a series of concert performances, 'Non solo Verdi', performed at various scenes in Jerusalem by students of the Jerusalem Academy and Opera Studio of the New Israeli Opera. Further research in the field of Italian opera, which he is currently conducting in collaboration with Rimona Paul, focuses on the ambiguous yet widely practiced musical-dramatic sub-genre of opera semi-seria.

Two Hebrew-language monographs, *The Enchantment of Verdi's Operas* and *The Enchantment of Puccini's Operas* (Jerusalem, Carmel Publications, 2014 and 2020, respectively) that originated in a series of broadcast lectures, represent the public musicology aspect of his endeavours. These popular books pay considerable attention to the dramatic and literary sources underlying the operas discussed, their cultural background, and their stage histories, becoming standards of highbrow discussion as well as general interest.

The Baroque Solo Concerto Project came into being as a collaboration between Jehoash Hirshberg and Simon McVeigh of the Goldsmiths, University of London. In addition to several articles and critical editions, their joint work yielded a monograph, *The Italian Solo Concerto, 1700-1760: Rhetorical Strategies and Style History* (Woodbridge, The Boydell Press, 2004), in which McVeigh and Hirshberg delved into the contemporary historical-cultural ecosystem, scrutinising several hundred opening movements by Antonio Vivaldi in an attempt to reveal the structural and rhetorical principles underlying this vast corpus. Their analytical study produced a new, original framework for considering the genre as a whole while turning away from strict, obsolete linguistic and functional models. Furthermore, the two scholars expanded their model to include the vibrant repertoire of Vivaldi's contemporaries, such as

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Tomaso Albinoni, Benedetto Marcello, Giuseppe Matteo Alberti, and Giuseppe Tartini. Their in-depth study yielded practical results as well, leading to the concert revival of neglected works by some of the finest Italian virtuosi and concerto authors, among them Carlo Tessarini, Giuseppe Antonio Brescianello, Mauro d'Alai, Gaetano Maria Schiassi, Andrea Zani, and Angelo Maria Scaccia, to mention just a few.

Especially notable is Hirshberg's pioneering contribution to the emerging new discipline of Israeli Art Music, which he undertook to establish and shape. Already in the early stages of his career, Jehoash took care to document the quickly vanishing historical evidence, including personal accounts and historical documentation of musical life in British Mandate Palestine and early Israeli statehood. Often, as in the case of several recorded interviews he conducted beginning in the 1970s, such contributions allow us a singular and rare glimpse into this bygone period. His work culminated in his biography of the prominent Israeli composer Paul Ben-Haim (1897-1984), who has become renown as the foremost representative of the 'fifth Aliyah', the immigration wave induced by the National Socialist rise to power. Completed shortly before the composer's death, *Paul Ben-Haim: His Life and Works* (Tel Aviv, Israel Music Institute, 1983, in Hebrew, revised English edition, 2010) provides a comprehensive review of Ben-Haim's personal and artistic development, into which several general themes, such as the crisis of migration and the problematised 'Mediterraneanism', are interwoven. These topics have been thoroughly addressed in subsequent studies, *Alexander Uriyah Boskovich: His Life, His Work, and His Thought* (with Herzl Shmueli, Jerusalem, The Public Council for Culture and the Arts & Carmel Publications, 1995), and the groundbreaking *Music in the Jewish Community of Palestine 1880-1948: A Social History*, published the same year (Oxford, Oxford University Press). The latter monograph is notable as the first methodological study of musical life in the Jewish Yishuv, an area that general historiography had mostly sidestepped, while calling attention to music's central role in a variety of social functions and revealing music as a highly constructive and illuminating historiographical resource. His dedication to the goal of Israeli Art Music did not wane over the coming decades, as he launched into the project that he envisioned as a series of monographs in the life-and-work genre produced by Carmel Publications, Jerusalem. These include comprehensive monographs dedicated to Yehezkel Braun (in collaboration with Rotem Luz, 2016), Tzvi Avni (with the composer and Rakefet Bar-Sadeh, 2020), and most recently, Josef Tal (with Michael Wolpe, Ofra Yitzhaki, Yosef Goldenberg, Shoshana Ze'evi and Liran Gurkiewicz, 2023).

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Finally, mention should be made of these studies that while continuing Jehoash's engagement with the sociocultural aspects of music reflect his commitment to ethnographic documentation and his interest in music sociology. A primary example is set by his study of the traditional music of the Karaite community and its Diaspora, collected and documented in Ramle, Cairo, and San Francisco. An entirely different angle opens up in his study of professional musicians from the post-Soviet space (*Profession: Musician. The Process of Absorption of the Musician-Immigrants from the Former Soviet Union*, Jerusalem, The Jerusalem Institute for Israel Studies, 1997, in Hebrew), with Bella Brover-Lubovsky and Michal Ben-Zur. Building on and expanding his interest in émigré musicians, Hirshberg took the opportunity to examine the social and cultural adjustment of recently arrived post-Soviet immigrants who settled in Israel during the 1990s, observing their struggle to rebuild musical careers and inquiring into processes of preservation and change, transition, and cultural transfer. Such themes echo his exhaustive work on the effects of migration on first generation Israeli composers who arrived during the 1930s and the effects of migration on their creative output.

Jehoash's frequent collaborations and joint publications, some with former students, attest to his collegial loyalty and professional devotion. The present collection of essays is intended as a homage to his personal and pedagogical generosity.

In 2023, Jehoash Hirshberg was awarded the prestigious Israel Prize in Music and Musicology, adding to the recognition of his achievements through awards such as the Engel Prize (2011) and the Ministry of Culture Prize (2021). He is an Honorary Fellow of the Academy of Music and Dance in Jerusalem (2013). His lifelong partner and spouse, Israela, retired from a long and influential career as a well-loved high school teacher and social worker. They have four sons and six grandchildren. Since his retirement in 2006, Jehoash has continued to publish.

The essay collection presented here combines a variety of subjects, repertoires and methodologies, with the aim of both echoing and reproducing the diversity that has characterized Jehoash's scholarly work. The introductory essay by Bella Brover-Lubovsky muses on the issue of the so-called 'minor composers', while tracing the cultural and historiographical reasons for the posthumous oblivion of such once-successful, influential figures. This general theme serves as a common thread running through several articles in the collection, which together provide a multifaceted perspective on the subject. In their own, distinct manner, each of the composers discussed fulfilled a key role in a particular set of circumstances. Michael Talbot brings to light the life and career of Henry Holcombe, a native British singer and composer, analysing the British Italianofilia tradition in chamber

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music. Alon Schab opens a crack into the virtually unknown environment of eighteenth-century London composers while exploring the compositional process underlying a fragmentary autograph of an incomplete flute concerto by Carl Friedrich Weidemann, a flutist in G. F. Handel's orchestra. Simon McVeigh draws on the role of the viola (along with its historical derivations) in the concert life of eighteenth-century London and its continuous impact on the musical style of the present-day repertoire. Alexander Knapp explores Ernest Bloch's little-known and seldom performed *Macbeth* (1909), the composer's only operatic work. Here we encounter the issue of reception from yet another perspective. While the 1911 premiere revealed Bloch's operatic gifts to the world, in the end the musical version of *Macbeth's* profound psychological drama remained largely obscure, never entering mainstream repertoire.

Another recurring theme in this collection is composers' engagement with stylistic and generic norms, which often surpass traditional perceptions to produce a new interpretative space. Turning to the realm of chamber music, Yoel Greenberg analyses the afterlife of Baroque dance topoi in Brahms's chamber works, suggesting that such references might be understood in the context of the contemporary debate among composers and critics of the New German School regarding the relationship between the dance medium and 'abstract' instrumental music. Lawrence Bernstein's contribution considers Gustav Mahler's compositions through the lens of contemporary opera. Drawing on Adorno's observation that Mahler's symphonies and their underlying narratives resemble opera more than 'absolute music', Bernstein interprets Mahler's First Symphony as embodying the concept of the 'New Symphony', imaginatively blending structural design with operatic and theatrical impulses.

The problem of genre classification is further discussed in an essay by Rimona Paul, addressing the Romantic semi-seria opera and its progression *en route* to realism through her study of Prince Józef Michał Poniatowski's *La Contessina* (1868). Focusing on music performance, the essay by Eitan Ornoy offers a fresh perspective. Examining the presentation of Vivaldi's *Le quattro stagioni* in current pop music video clips, Ornoy points to the connection between Historically Informed Performance practices and pop-oriented renderings of Western classical repertoire. Yosef Goldenberg addresses another area of Hirshberg's significant contributions: Israeli music. Adopting Hirshberg's proposed model for evaluating the various trajectories taken by Israeli composers, Goldenberg expands on one of its categories, 'popular nationalism', assessing its usefulness and viability in considering relevant repertoire.

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Many composers' personal and professional trajectories pass between cultures and geographical spaces. The essays in this collection touch upon Hirshberg's work on these subjects while adding new angles, and in some cases covering new grounds. Malcolm Miller's enlightening essay on the pioneering Jewish composer Samuel Alman sheds light on a largely understudied musician who composed the first-ever Yiddish opera, *King Abaz* (1911), produced in London's East End in 1912-1913. Irit Youngerman re-examines the two symphonies by the German-Jewish composer Paul Ben-Haim, composed in British Palestine during the Second World War, outlining a new reading of the works' narrative content based on an analysis of the composer's diverse musical borrowings. Among the immigrants arriving in the newly founded State of Israel was the Iraqi-Jewish composer Salim Al-Nūr, the subject of Sara Manasseh's contribution. Based on a personal interview with the composer, the essay illuminates a little-explored subject while drawing attention to the complicated relation between the Jewish Diaspora and Israeli culture. Continuing the theme of émigré composers, Yulia Kreinin's contribution examines four compositions by Mark Kopytman, who immigrated from the Soviet Union in 1973. As his resettlement closely intersected with the outbreak of the Yom Kippur War, Kopytman was immediately drawn to express his experience of contemporary plights, seeking inspiration in a variety of Jewish texts.

At the opposite end of the 'minor composers' theme stand such major figures as Hector Berlioz and Richard Wagner. Both are presented here, however, from uncommon angles. Peter Bloom reveals Berlioz's 'Jewish friends', tracing the role of Jewish musicians, scholars and prominent individuals acting within the network that formed his close musical and intellectual environment, while raising the issue of the composer's political and social views. More problematic is, of course, Richard Wagner, whose controversial legacy posits him as the ideal 'villain' in literary fiction, as Naphtali Wagner observes, examining the composer's appearance in a variety of literary works.

Bella Brover-Lubovsky & Irit Youngerman

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