DAVID CHEVAN
WITH
HAZZAN ALBERTO MIZRAHI
AND
THE AFRO-SEMITIC EXPERIENCE

YIZKOR

MUSIC OF MEMORY
There are three ways to mourn. The first is to cry. The second is to grow silent. The third is to transform sorrow into song.

- Abraham Joshua Heschel
The motivation for composing this music was personal. My great-aunt Gertie, the last living member of her generation, had recently died, as had Larry Brass a friend of my family and the father of one of my son's best friends. Around the same time two of my best friends had near death encounters. John Brehm barely survived a brain infection and then another friend came so close to dying that one afternoon I found myself singing the Mourner's Kaddish. The opening phrase of that melody was eventually transformed into the beginning of my setting for Yizkor.

Yizkor is, in some respects, the Jewish equivalent of the Requiem Mass. It consists of a distinct group of prayers and psalms that have been recited since the time of the Crusades. My desire to create a personal statement was transformed when I made the decision to creatively engage with this tradition and compose settings for these texts. It also allowed me to compose Hazzanut, a florid turn-of-the-century musical language used by cantors that has almost disappeared in contemporary synagogue practice.

I found that the more I studied the prayers and conversed with friends, family, and colleagues about the subject, the more the work was able to encompass a wider range of universal themes. I became more conscious of the personal and communal importance of memory and mourning. There is more that I could say, but instead I will allow the music and Cantor Mizrahi's voice do the talking. A longer essay that discusses my compositional process, the prayers, and the history of the Yizkor service can be found on my web site: www.chevan.addr.com. What follows are transliterations of the Hebrew and English translations of those words.

- David Chevan
Adonai, Mah Adam

My God, what is man that you recognize him?
The son of a mortal that you calculate him?
Man is like a passing breath, his days are like a passing shadow.
In the morning it blossoms and is rejuvenated,
By evening it is cast down and dried up.
According to the count of our days, so may you teach us;
Then we shall acquire a heart of wisdom.
Guard the simple and watch the upright,
Because the end for that man is peace.

Psalm 16 -
Shiviti Adonai (Nepdi Tamid)

I keep God always before me; He is at my side,
Because He is at my right hand, I shall not be moved.
Therefore my heart is happy and my whole being exults,
My whole body will rest secure.
Psalm 121 - Esa Enai

Esa einai el heharim me'yin yavo ezri,
Ezri me'im adonai oseh shamayim va'aretz.
Al yitein lamot raglekha al yanum shom'rekha.
Hinei lo yanum v'lo yishan shomer Yisrael.
Adonai shom'rekha Adonai tzil'ka al yad y'minekha.
Yomam hashemesh lo yakekah v'yareiakh balaila.
Adonai yishmor'kha mikol ra yishimot et naf'sh'kha.
Adonai yishmor tzeitkha u'voekha me'atah v'ad olam.

I lift up my eyes to the mountains: from where will come my help?
My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.
He will not let your foot slip. He who watches over you will not slumber;
Look, He who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is your guard, the Lord is your shade at your right hand;
The sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night.
The Lord will guard you from all harm. He will guard your life;
The Lord will guard your coming and going, both now and forever more.

Yizkor for Martyrs

Yizkor Elohim nishmot kol akheinu b'nei Yisrael she'masru et nafsham al kidush hashem. Hineni noder tzedakah b'ad hazkarat nishmoteihem. Anah yishama b'khayeinu hed g'vuratam um'sirutam v'yera'eh b'ma'aseinu tohar libam V'ti'h'yeinah nafshoteihem tz'ruot bitz'ror hakhayim ut'hi m'nukhatam kavod,
S'va s'makhot et panekha, n'imot bimin'kha netzakh. Amen.

May God remember the souls of all our brethren, the children of Israel who have given their lives for the sanctification of your name. I am offering charity on behalf of the memory of their souls. May the echo of their courage and their devotion be heard in our lifetime and may the purity of their hearts be reflected in our deeds and may their souls be bound in the bond of life and may they rest in dignity. Joys overflowing in your presence, the pleasantness of your right hand forever. Amen.
Psalm 23

Mizmor l'David. Adonai ro'i lo ekhsar.
Bin'ot desheh yarbitzeini; al mei m'nukhot y'nahaleini.
Naf'shi y'shoveiv yan'kheini v'mag'lei tzdekh l'ma'an sh'mo.
Gam ki eilekh b'gei tzal'mavet lo irah rah ki ata imadi;
Shiv't'kh'a u'mish'antekha heima y'nakhamuni.
T'a'arokh l'fanai shulkhan neged tzorera dishan'ta vashemen roshi kosi r'vaya
Akh tov vakhesed yir'd'funi kol y'mei khayai v'shavti b'veit Adonai l'orekh yamim.

A song of David.
The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.
He makes me to lie down in green pastures: he leads me beside still waters.
He restores my soul: he leads me in right paths for the sake of his name.
Even when I walk in the valley of the shadow of death, I shall fear no evil: for you
are with me; with rod and staff you comfort me.
You have set a table before me in the presence of my enemies: you have anointed
my head with oil: my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I shall dwell
in the house of the Lord for ever.

El Malech Rakhamin

El moleh rakhamim, shokhen b'm'romim, ham'tze m'nukha n'khona takhat kanfei
hashekhkhina b'ma'alot k'doshim k'zohar harakiya mazhirim, et nishmot kal akheinu b'nai
Yisrael, anashim nashim vetef, sh'nehergu vesh'nisr'fu v'she'nekhni'ku, b'gan eden t'hi
m'nukhatam. Ana baal harakhamim, hastirem b'seter k'nafeshkha l'olamim utzror bitzror
hakhayim et nishmoteihem. Adonai hu nakhalatam, v'yanukhu v'shalom al mishk'voteihem.
V'nomar Amen.

God, full of compassion, who dwells on high, grant perfect peace under the wings of your
presence for the holy and pure souls who shine exalted, for the souls of our brethren the
children of Israel, women, men, little children, who were killed, murdered, slaughtered,
burned, drowned, and strangled for the holiness of the name. May their resting place be in the
Garden of Eden, please, master of eternity, shelter them in the shelter of your wings for all time
and bind their souls in the bond of life. The Lord is their inheritance. May they rest in peace
in their places of rest. And let us say: Amen.
Thank you to Julie, Jesse and Noah, my parents Albert and Janet and to all my many relatives. The Yiddishkeit that I grew up with and still enjoy starts in the home. Thank you to Alberto, Alvin, Baba, Jesse, Stacy, Warren, and Will. The sessions were incredible and I cannot imagine a better group of individuals for this project. Thanks to Greg DiCrosta and to Nick Lloyd and the staff at Firehouse 12. Thanks also to Maurice and Marc; you find ways to sing Yizkor in your images. Thanks also to Jay Miles, Angel Tirado, and the rest of the film crew. A very special thank you to Alberto Mizrahi; the gift of your voice, your time and all of your efforts and ideas during the sessions is one that I can never properly repay. Your menschlichkeit will stay with me forever. The making of the music on this album included months of rehearsals in my living room with Stacy Phillips, Will Bartlett, Warren Byrd and Cantor Martin Levson. Without their willingness to try anything as we worked on these pieces I don’t think I could have completed this composition. Warren Byrd helped me to realize the melodies with his rich harmonic palette, effortless musicality, and good humor. Warren, I am grateful that I have been blessed to have you for a friend and creative partner. I am also grateful for the friendship and musicality of Cantor Martin Levson. Martin, you gave so much time and you were involved in the critical work that allowed this piece to come to life. Thank you to Cantor Jack Mendelson for the many hours teaching me hazzanut and putting up with all of my questions. This album would have been impossible without your mentoring and support. Thanks to the following cantors, rabbis, musicians and friends for sharing their time, voices, and ideas: Cantor Jack Chomsky, Cantor Erik Contzius, Cantor Laura Croen, Cantor Dorothy Goldberg, Cantor Nitza Amit Shamah, Cantor Yvon Shore, Rabbi Herbert Brockman, Anthony Coleman, Matt Darriau, Frank London, Cookie Segelstein, Scott Sasanecki, Thia Knowlton, Moishe Rosenfeld, Boni Sussman and Rabbi Gerry Sussman. Generous support for the recording of this CD was provided by a research grant from CSU-AAUP.
1. ADONAI, MAH ADAM (MY GOD, WHAT IS MAN?) (4:43)
   (DAVID CHEVAN AND WARREN BYRD, INTRO BY WILL BARTLETT)
   RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI, BYRDSPEAK MUSIC, C++ MUSIC

2. PSALM 16 SHIVITI ADONAI L'NEGDI TAMID
   (I KEEP GOD BEFORE ME AT ALL TIMES) (7:05)
   (DAVID CHEVAN) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI

3. PSALM 121 ESA ENAI (I RAISE MY EYES) (2:54)
   (DAVID CHEVAN) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI

4. YIZKOR FOR MARTYRS (5:26)
   (DAVID CHEVAN) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI

5. PSALM 23 (9:42)
   (DAVID CHEVAN AND WARREN BYRD) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI,
   BYRDSPEAK MUSIC

6. EL MALEH RAKHAMIM (GOD, FULL OF COMPASSION) (10:56)
   (DAVID CHEVAN) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI

BONUS TRACKS

7. ADONAI, MAH ADAM (INSTRUMENTAL VERSION) (4:45)
   (DAVID CHEVAN AND WARREN BYRD) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI,
   BYRDSPEAK MUSIC

8. ESA ENAI (INSTRUMENTAL VERSION) (3:32)
   (DAVID CHEVAN) RECKLESS DC MUSIC, BMI

HAZZAN ALBERTO MIZRAHI VOICE
WILL BARTLETT TENOR SAX, CLARINET,
BASS CLARINET, FLUTE
WARREN BYRD PIANO
DAVID CHEVAN BASS
JESSE CHEVAN DRUM SET (TRACKS 1 AND 7)
ALVIN CARTER, JR. DRUM SET (TRACKS 2-6, 8)
AND PERCUSSION (TRACKS 1 AND 7)
BABA DAVID COLEMAN PERCUSSION
STACY PHILLIPS VIOLIN AND RESONATOR GUITAR

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