Part II: Yom Kippur

The Birthday of the World

Music and Traditions of the High Holy Days
Sung by The Western Wind and Chorus
Matthew Lazar, Guest Conductor

Leonard Nimoy, narrator
Narration written by Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik

Cantors:
Alberto Mizrahi, Faith Steinsnyder Gurney, Charles Osborne, Jacob Mendelson
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The Western Wind:
Phyllis Elaine Clark, Mary Ellen Callahan, sopranos
William Zukof, countertenor
Timothy Leigh Evans, Michael Steinberger, tenors
Elliot Z. Levine, baritone

with
Wilbur Pauley, bass; Alexandra Montano, mezzo-soprano

Chorus:
Rachel Rosales, Susan Montgomery, sopranos
Kathy J. Barr, Phyllis Jo Kubey, altos
Stephen Rosser, tenor
Frank Barr, Mark Duer, basses

Producer: Mark Johnson
Executive Producer: William Zukof

THE WESTERN WIND VOCAL ENSEMBLE

Since 1969, the internationally acclaimed vocal sextet, THE WESTERN WIND, has devoted itself to the special beauty and variety of a cappella music. The Ensemble's repertoire reveals its wide-ranging interests, from Renaissance motets to Jazz, from medieval carols to barbershop quartets, from complex works by avant-garde composers to the simplest folk tunes.

In America the Ensemble has appeared at many distinguished institutions including Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, Kennedy Center, ArtPark, the Ordway Theater, the Metropolitan Museum, the Frick Museum, the Jewish Museum, Folger Shakespeare Library, Library of Congress, and the Cleveland Museum of Art.

In Europe the sextet taped early and contemporary American vocal music for the West German National Radio (WDR) at Cologne, and made several triumphant tours of northern Italy, performing Italian Renaissance as well as American music. The group has appeared with the RAI Orchestra and Chorus of Rome at the Rome Opera and Venice's legendary opera house, La Fenice. In 1985, The Western Wind premiered César
and at the state conventions of the Iowa, Illinois and Indiana choral directors.

The Western Wind is especially active in arts education, presenting intensive and innovative programs in choral singing for students in the New York City Public Schools. The Western Wind has also led workshops and master classes throughout the United States, and has worked with many outstanding educational programs including the Lincoln Center Institute, The New York Philharmonic Max Program and Artsconnection. Summer workshops in ensemble singing are held annually at Smith College, The Phoenecia Pathwork Center, and The Omega Institute for Holistic Studies.

In addition to its concert tours and educational activities, the group produces a series of holiday specials for National Public Radio. They have appeared on the Today Show and made many award-winning recordings: **Early American Vocal Music**, L'AMFIPARNAISO, AN OLD-FASHIONED CHRISTMAS, and THE HAPPY JOURNEY (Nonesuch Records); **Christmas in the New World** (Musical Heritage); BIRTH OF THE WARGod (Laurel); SATIRES, BALLADS AND Bop (Newport Classics); **The Western Wind Songbook: Volume I, SACRED** (Resmiranda); **The Passover Story**, THE CHANUKkah STORY, MAZAL BUENO: A PORTRAIT IN SONG OF THE SPANISH JEWS, BLESSINGS AND BATèY, featuring music by David Darling, Tania León and Michel Camilo, and O WESTERN WIND, AN (ALMOST) A CAPPella SONGBOOK (Western Wind Records). The Western Wind can also be heard singing Philip Glass’ music for the films **Koyaanisqatsi** (Antilles Records) and **Candyman**. The Western Wind won the ASCAP—Chamber Music America Award for Adventurous Programming of Contemporary Music during the 1987–88 Season.
LEONARD NIMOY

(Narrator)

LEONARD NIMOY earned the admiration of generations for his portrayal of the Vulcan, Mr. Spock, on Star Trek. He also directed two Star Trek movies as well as the hit film Three Men and a Baby.

In 1991, Nimoy starred in and co-produced Never Forget, portraying a survivor who fought a successful court battle against those who denied that the Holocaust had occurred. He also received an Emmy nomination for his performance in A Woman Called Golda.

In addition to his autobiographies, I Am Not Spock (1975) and I Am Spock (1995), Nimoy has also written three volumes of poetry and recorded ten narrative albums.

MATTHEW LAZAR

guest conductor

Matthew Lazar is the founder of the Jewish choral movement in North America. He is founder and director of the Zamir Choral Foundation, the annual North American Jewish Choral Festival & Conference, the National Jewish Chorale, the SELAH Vocal Ensemble and HaZamir—the National Jewish High School Choir. Mr. Lazar was artistic director of the Heritage Series of Jewish Music at Merkin Concert Hall in New York and served on the faculty of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America for eighteen years. He has conducted the El Paso Symphony Orchestra and the Milwaukee Chamber Orchestra in concerts celebrating the contributions of American Jewish composers to 20th century music. Mr. Lazar has conducted choruses, orchestras and soloists in large-scale presentations in New York’s Avery Fisher Hall, Chicago’s Rosemont Theater and in the Jerusalem Theater in Israel’s capital. He also produced a tribute to Jerusalem in Carnegie Hall in a program celebrating the 25th anniversary of the reunification of Jerusalem, featuring Elie Wiesel. Mr. Lazar is a member of the national Jerusalem 3,000 planning committee.
Cantors (in order of appearance):

ALBERTO MIZRAHI
Hazzan (Cantor) Alberto Mizrahi has thrilled audiences world-wide in Jewish recitals, symphony concerts, and opera. Mizrahi’s repertoire spanning nine languages makes his performances unique. He has appeared with major orchestras around the world including the New York Philharmonic, Jerusalem Symphony, NDR Symphony (Hanover), Royal Hungarian Opera Orchestra, Belgrade Philharmonic and El Paso Symphony, often performing works composed especially for him. He has also appeared with the Dave Brubeck Quartet in Brubeck’s oratorio Gates of Justice. In addition to Jewish and operatic repertoire, Mizrahi has performed Kodaly’s Psalmus Hungaricus, the Verdi Requiem, Handel’s Judas Maccabeus, Hajdu’s Dreams of Spain and Job, Braun’s Hallel, Sheriff’s Sephardic Passion, and Beveridge’s Yizkor/Requiem. Alberto Mizrahi is featured on numerous recordings including Chants Mystiques (Polygram) and is often heard on public radio and television.

Mizrahi came to the United States from Athens as a boy. His maternal grandfather was a Sephardic cantor and his mother a soprano whose career was cut short by World War II. In addition to his cantorial repertoire, he has delved deeply into his native Sephardic culture and is a noted interpreter of Ladino songs. A graduate of the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, he was a student of David Kusevitsky and for the last twenty years, Moshe Ganchoff. He sings Eastern European cantorial music in a style that uniquely connects his own authentic Middle Eastern musical identity—whose influences are inherent in the Ashkenazic repertoire—to his operatic vocal training.

A noted teacher, he has given master classes for the Cantors Assembly, the London B’nai B’rith Jewish Music Festival, the North American Jewish Choral Festival, and the Cantorial School, Tel Aviv. Cantor Mizrahi is Hazzan at the Anshe Emet Synagogue in Chicago.

FAITH STEINSNYDER GURNEY
Cantor Faith Steinsnyder Gurney was introduced to the world of Jewish music while singing in the youth choir of Beth Torah Congregation in North Miami Beach, Florida, under the direction of Cantor Jacob Mendelson. Following studies at the School of Music of Indiana University in Bloomington, she attended the School of Sacred Music at Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute
of Religion in New York, receiving a degree in sacred music. Upon investiture as cantor, she served congregations in Pennsylvania and Connecticut, and is currently the cantor of the Baltimore Hebrew Congregation. Her coaches include Cantors Moshe Ganchoff, Jacob Mendelson, Israel Goldstein and Lawrence Avery, and she credits these mentors for being supportive of female cantors and the woman's voice in hazzanut.

Cantor Gurney has served on the faculties of the School of Sacred Music of Hebrew Union College—Jewish Institute of Religion, the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America and the Academy for Jewish Religion in New York City. She was the first woman appointed to teach nusach (melodies and modes) and coach the traditional styles in each of these cantorial schools.

Cantor Gurney has been heard in concert throughout the United States singing hazzanut, Hebrew and Ladino art songs, as well as show music and opera. She has been featured on New York's classical radio station WQXR, has sung at Merkin Concert Hall, and has performed roles with Amato Opera, Mannes Opera, Brooklyn Conservatory Opera and Opera at the Academy.

CHARLES OSBORNE Cantor Charles David Osborne is a graduate of the Hartt College of Music, where he studied with Hazzan (Cantor) Arthur Koret. He is also a graduate of the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America. He studied hazzanut with Cantors Max Wohlberg, Charles Davidson and David Kusevitsky. His instructors also included Miriam Gideon and Hugo Weisgall for musical composition, and Matthew Lazar for conducting. He has studied privately with Cantor Moshe Ganchoff.

A lyric tenor, Osborne has given numerous recital, concert and operatic performances in the United States and Europe, including Carnegie Hall, Alice Tully Hall and Merkin Hall in New York, Chicago, Los Angeles, Washington, D.C., Ft. Lauderdale, El Paso, and Boston. He has done world premieres of compositions by Elie Siegmeister, Marc Blitzstein, Robert Starer and Yehezkel Braun. He has received an Off-Broadway Theater Award for his portrayal of Itzhak in Blitzstein's opera Idiots First.

In Jewish music, Cantor Osborne has made numerous appearances as soloist with the Zamir Chorale of Boston, the Zamir Chorale of New York, SELAH, and as a member of Jubal's Lyre. He has appeared on
WOR-Television and WNBC-Radio in New York, WCRB-Radio in Boston, and on public television. Osborne has recorded with the Zamir Chorale of Boston and the Eastman School Chorale under Dr. Samuel Adler. Since 1987, Cantor Osborne has served as Hazan of Temple Emanuel of Newton Centre, MA, the largest Conservative congregation in New England.

Cantor Osborne's compositions are performed in synagogues throughout the United States and Canada.

Solomon Mendelson, was his early mentor and tutor. An assistant professor of liturgical music at the Cantors Institute of the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, as well as faculty member of the Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music and the Academy of Jewish Religion, Cantor Mendelson has taught and served as mentor to a generation of young cantors, including Cantor Gurney, who is heard on this recording. Jacob Mendelson is Cantor of Temple Israel Center in White Plains, New York.

JACOB BEN-ZION MENDELSON

Jacob Ben-Zion Mendelson is an international figure in the field of East European cantorial repertoire. Cantor Mendelson grew up in Borough Park, Brooklyn, one of the major residential neighborhoods settled by upwardly mobile Jews who, in the early 1900's, had begun to liberate themselves from the teeming ghettos of New York's Lower East Side.

Cantor Mendelson was witness in his boyhood to the dwindling days of the "golden age of hazzanut" which flourished in America from the early 1900's to about 1960. His grandfather was a Chassidic rabbi, his uncle was a cantor and his older brother,

RABBI GERALD C. SKOLNIK (author, narration)

Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik, spiritual leader of the Forest Hills Jewish Center since 1981, was ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary after completing degree programs at New York University and Yeshiva University.

In addition, Rabbi Skolnik is involved in numerous communal activities. He serves on the board of directors of the UJA Federation of Greater New York, as well as chairing its Committee on AIDS. He is the Director of the Jewish Laymen's Institute, a member of the Board of Trustees of The Solomon Schechter School of Queens, a member of the Rabbinical Assembly's Committee on
Jewish Law and Standards, and a member of the Board of Trustees of the Forest Hills Community House. Rabbi Skolnik has published a number of articles and review essays, lectured extensively throughout the New York area, and has appeared on national radio and television. Included in his writing credits is an earlier collaboration with the Western Wind Vocal Ensemble and Theodore Bikel on THE CHANUKKAH STORY, for which he wrote the script.

Rabbi Skolnik is married to Robin Segal Skolnik, a social worker. They have four children, Hillel, Leora, Talya, and Matan.

The fast of Yom Kippur lasts approximately twenty-five hours, from sunset to sunset. Traditionally both the opening evening and the entire day thereafter are spent in prayer in the synagogue. The liturgy, which is enormously rich in form, content, and music, is divided into five major services. The Kol Nidre Service, named for its flagship prayer, makes up the opening Ma'ariv or evening service. Shacharit and Musaf are the morning and early afternoon services. Mincha is the afternoon service, and Ne'ila the service which closes out the long day.

Yom Kippur, along with Rosh Hashanah, is the best known of Jewish holidays. Yom Kippur, however, is unique. Most Jewish festival days are celebratory in nature. They indulge the senses and seek to involve the worshipper in the beauty and wonder of God's world. Although there are also penitential prayers in the daily services, in no way do these prayers dominate the service even though their presence is significant. It is only on Yom Kippur that the Jew is actually commanded to focus on his or her inadequacies and shortcomings. No one is exempt from its call or without need of spiritual repair. All lives, in order to be godly, need constant examination and improvement. Yom Kippur affords the individual the opportunity for forgiveness, no matter how estranged or alienated he or she may be from God and the community. The lengthy day—an intense and exhausting experience—is intended to leave one feeling cleansed and purified, innocent in judgment and secure in God's love. After the spiritual rigors of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur's ultimate message is one of solace and divine embrace. It is the beginning of a new spiritual life.

—Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik
A NOTE ABOUT THE TEXTS: All poetry for the music on this recording is found in the High Holy Day prayerbook known as the Mahzor in Hebrew. The Mahzor includes psalms and prayers from the time of the Temple, selections from the Bible and the commentaries (Talmud and Midrash), writings of recent centuries, and most importantly medieval liturgical poems of praise known as piyyutim. Most of the more extended pieces on this recording—Omnom Kayn, Ki Hineh Kachomer, Unesane Tokef—are settings of piyyutim.

A NOTE ABOUT THE HEBREW: The Ashkenazic (European) rather than the modern or Sephardic pronunciation and transliteration are used for pieces by composers from the European tradition. Therefore, Shiviti in modern Hebrew, is spelled and pronounced Shivisi in its musical setting by Salomon Sulzer.

In deference to those who believe that the name of God should not be uttered outside of the actual worship service, Adonai has been changed to Adomai according to established custom.

Notes and Texts

Kol Nidre (Cantor: Mizrahi)
transcribed by Sholom Secunda (1894-1974)

Ma'ariv, the evening service of Yom Kippur, is preceded by the Kol Nidre prayer. This prayer occupies a singular place in the Jewish liturgy and is sung to one of the most famous melodies in Jewish music. The Kol Nidre is considered a Misinai (from Sinai) melody. Today we know that these melodies emerged in Germany between the 11th and 15th centuries. According to tradition, however, these chants were received by Moses directly from God and brought down from Mt. Sinai along with the Ten Commandments. Therefore they cannot be changed or ornamented too floridly.

Many Jews who have no daily Jewish identification come to the synagogue at least once a year to hear the Kol Nidre chanted. That this prayer should be so important is puzzling to us today. Chanted three times in ancient Aramaic, its language is stilted and esoteric. Its subject—a legal formula for the cancellation of vows to God taken unwisely or in haste—seems strangely irrelevant to the intense sanctity of the day. But beyond the words is a haunting, bittersweet melody of soul-cleansing power.

Sholom Secunda's setting of the Kol Nidre, written for Richard Tucker in 1953, provides a striking choral accompaniment to the traditional melody. Born in Aleksandriya in the southern Ukraine, Sholom Secunda emigrated to the United States in 1908. In New York City he attended Cooper Union, Columbia University, and the Institute of Music and Art. In his early youth he sang as a synagogue chorister and in 1914 produced his first musical play at the Oden Yiddish Theatre. He served as musical director and composer at many Yiddish theaters, as lecturer in various institutions of higher learning, as synagogue choral conductor, and as music critic for the Jewish Daily Forward. Secunda is known for writing Yiddish musical plays and operettas, scores for films, oratorios, chamber music, liturgical works, and folk songs. Especially popular are his songs Bei Mir Bist Du Sheyn, Dos Yiddishe Lied, and Dona, Dona. He
served for many years as music director of the Brooklyn Jewish Center, where Richard Tucker served as cantor.

All vows, bonds, promises, obligations, and oaths [to the Creator] wherewith we have vowed, sworn and bound ourselves from this Day of Atonement unto the next Day of Atonement, may it come unto us for good; lo, of all these we repent us in them. They shall be absolved, released, annulled, made void, and of no effect; they shall not be binding, nor shall they have any power. Our vows [to the Creator] shall not be vows; our bonds shall not be bonds; and our oaths shall not be oaths.

V'nislach
Solo Quartet: Callahan, Zukof, Steinberger, Levine
Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890)

Salomon Sulzer is the seminal figure in the reform of the synagogue service that accompanied the emancipation of Western European Jewry. Starting in the late 1700's with the establishment of constitutional democracy, Jews in Western Europe were gradually freed to enter civil society. Sulzer attempted with music and the reform of the service to synthesize the collective Jewish yearning to assimilate and yet retain a distinct Jewish identity. Born in Hohenems, Austria, Sulzer's mother vowed to devote him to the service of God if he were to survive a childhood drowning accident. He grew to manhood possessing a phenomenal baritone-tenor voice with enormous range and was steered toward liturgical music. He was appointed cantor at the new Seitenstetengasse Temple in Vienna built in 1826. The first hazzan to borrow the title of kantor from the church, Sulzer organized a dignified, orderly service with the cantor and choir at the center of the liturgy. He introduced the four-part choir of men and boys supplanting the old style of three-part singing performed in the past by two meshorerim—usually a boy soprano or alto (sometimes an adult male alto) and a bass—who together with a hazzan formed a trio. He also advocated for the use of the organ in the synagogue. He was much admired by his contemporary composers in Vienna, including Franz Liszt, and Franz Schubert who composed Tov Lehodos (Psalm 92) for Sulzer and his choir. The German-style melodies Sulzer employed in his chants and compositions were scorned as "churchy" by many segments of the community and by the Eastern European Jews. Ironically, many of these same melodies—notably the Sh'ma Yisrael—have re-entered the oral tradition over the years and are now regarded as "traditional." Sulzer's cantor-choir service became the model for almost all large synagogues in Central and Eastern Europe and subsequently for the congregations established by European Jews in America.

And the congregation of Israel shall be forgiven, as well as the stranger that dwells among them, since the people have transgressed unwittingly.

Omnom Kayn
Solos: Callahan, Clark
Sholom Secunda (1894-1974)

In medieval Jewish folklore it was popularly believed that a heavenly court was convened during the High Holy Days. In this acrostic piyyut, Rabbi Yom Tov of
York, England, who was killed during the first Crusade in the massacre of 1189, portrays Satan as prosecutor and God as judge. Satan reminds God of our sins and urges that we be punished. A good angel serves as our defender and advocate. Arguing our acquittal, he urges God to say the one word that can set us free: Salacht...Forgiven!

Ay 'tis thus, evil hath us in bond;
By Thy grace efface our guilt and respond, 
Forgiven!

Cast scorn o'er as we abhor the prosecutor's word; 
Dear God, deign that this refrain be heard, 
Forgiven!

Earnestly incline Thine ear to our defender who pleads; 
Favor him and answer, King, when he entreats, 
Forgiven!

Ki Hineh Kachomer
Solos: Zukof, Steinberger, Clark, Levine
Mark Silver (1892-1965)

Mark Silver was born in Russia and emigrated to the United States in 1907. He began his musical studies at Columbia where he won the Mosenthal Fellowship for composition in 1911 and then received the first Pulitzer traveling prize in 1917. Mr. Silver served as music director of the Newark Young Men's and Young Women's Hebrew Association for 29 years as well as at B'nai Abraham Temple in Newark and Temple Beth-El in South Orange, New Jersey. He composed numerous Biblical cantatas for chorus and orchestra, and music for the Temple service for chorus and organ. He wrote two symphonies: Peace and War, performed by the Rochester Philharmonic under the direction of Howard Hanson as a selection in a national contest of American composers, and Funeral Hebraic, which has never been performed. An organ part which accompanies this lyric and gently impassioned setting of Ki Hineh Kachomer is performed here by chorus. In order to accommodate those congregations who would not sanction organ use, the organ accompaniment was written in four parts to allow the easy substitution of voices for the organ. Silver's older brother, Zavel Zilberts, was also an important and prolific Jewish music composer.

As clay are we, soft and yielding clay 
That lies between the fingers of the potter. 
At his will he molds it thick or thin, 
And forms its shape according to his fancy. 
So are we in Thy hand, God of love. 
Thy covenant recall and show Thy mercy.

As stone are we, inert, resistless stone 
That lies within the grasp of the mason. 
At his will he keeps it firm and whole, 
Or at his pleasure hews it into fragments. 
So are we in Thy hand, God of life. 
Thy covenant recall and show Thy mercy.

As iron are we, cold and rigid iron 
That lies within the clutch of the craftsman. 
At his will he forges it to shape, 
Or draws it boldly forth to lie unbended. 
So are we in Thy hand, God who saves. 
Thy covenant recall and show Thy mercy.
As glass are we, as thin, transparent glass
That lies within the clasp of the blower.
At his will he blows it crystal clear,
Or melts it down to suit his whim.
So are we in Thy hand, gracious God.
    Thy covenant recall and show Thy mercy.

As silver are we, with metal dross alloyed
That lies within the hand of the smelter.
At his will he fuses or refines,
Retains the slag or keeps it pure or precious.
So are we in Thy hand, healing God.
    Thy covenant recall and show Thy mercy.

Lewandowski’s original has been harmonized and modified by an unknown 20th-century composer. It introduces the traditional chant version of Sh’ma Koleinu/Al Tashlichenu L’et Tikna sung by Cantor Gurney with improvised choral accompaniment.

Hear our voices, Lord our God,
Give ear and grant our supplication.

Lord, forsake us not we pray,
Be with us when our strength fails.

Adonai Mah Adam (Cantor: Osborne)
Tzipora H. Jochsberger (b. 1920)

Tzipora H. Jochsberger is a prolific composer and music educator. Born in Germany in 1920, she was saved from the Nazi extermination that claimed her parents when, in 1939, at the age of 19, she was admitted to the Palestine Academy of Music in Jerusalem. After the war years, while spending a summer in study at the Juilliard School in New York, Joschsberger saw the limitations of the American Jewish community’s knowledge of its heritage, and she resolved to devote herself to Jewish music and the continuity of Jewish culture. She earned her doctorate in Jewish music at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America (where she also taught music education). She served for many years as the choral director for the Society for the Advancement of Judaism in New York City. After more than 25 years as founding director of the Hebrew Arts School for Jewish Music and Culture, she returned to Israel in 1986, and has since
been involved in several film projects documenting the music and culture of various Jewish communities in Israel. In addition to authoring several texts for teaching the recorder, Jochsberger is a composer of instrumental and choral compositions for secular as well as liturgical use. The Adonai Mah Adam is taken from B'kol Zimra, a collection of original choral works for cantor and choir.

O Lord, what is man that Thou art mindful of him?
And the son of man that Thou thinkest of him?
Yet Thou hast made him but little lower than the angels,
And hast crowned him with glory and honor.

Shivisi
Salomon Sulzer (1804-1890)

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

El Maleh Rachamin (Cantor: Gurney)
Traditional Chant

The El Maleh Rachamin prayer is found along with Adonai Mah Adam and Shivisi in the Yizkor or memorial section of the prayer book. It is sung at the graveside as well as at services of remembrance.

O merciful God, who dwellest on high and yet art full of compassion, keep in Thy divine presence among the holy and pure, whose light shineth as the brightness of the firmament, the souls of our dear and beloved who have gone to their eternal home with Thee. O may their souls be bound up in the bond of life, and their memories inspire us to serve Thee and our fellow men in truth, kindness and peace. Amen.

Unesane Tokef (Cantor: Mizrahi)
Solo: Levine
Traditional Chant

We will observe the mighty holiness of this day, for it is one of awe and anxiety. Thereon is Thy dominion exalted. On this day we conceive Thee established on Thy throne of mercy, sitting thereon in truth. We behold Thee, as Judge and Witness, recording our secret thoughts and acts and setting the seal thereon. Thou recordest everything; yea, Thou rememberest the things forgotten. Thou unfoldest the records, and the deeds thereon inscribed tell their own story for lo, the seal of every man's hand is set thereto.

Uveshohfar Gadol (Cantor: Mizrahi)
Solos: Zukof, Callahan
Based on selected motifs by A.B. Birnbaum (1865-1922)
Setting by Naphtali Herstik and Raymond Goldstein

Abraham Ber Birnbaum was a cantor, composer and shohet (ritual slaughterer), writer and teacher. Born into a Hassidic family in Poland, Birnbaum was a frequent guest at the courts of various Rebbes (Hassidic Rabbis)
where he sang and played the violin. In 1888 he was appointed hazzan-shohet in a small Hungarian village where he also studied German and music theory. After a short stint in Moravia, he was appointed Oberkantor of the newly erected Chor-Schul (choir-synagogue) in Czestochowa, a position he held until 1913. He later settled in Lodz, Poland, where he devoted himself to teaching. The Uveshofar Gadol is a pastiche of Birnbaum's Eastern European themes, felicitously joined together by Naphtali Herstik and Raymond Goldstein. Herstik is currently cantor and Goldstein the music director and arranger at the Great Synagogue in Jerusalem.

The great shofar is sounded, and a still small voice is heard. The angels in heaven are dismayed and are seized with fear and trembling, as they proclaim: "Behold the Day of Judgment!" The hosts of heaven are to be arraigned in judgment, for in Thine eyes even they are not free from guilt. All who enter the world dost Thou cause to pass before Thee, one by one, as a flock of sheep. As a shepherd musters his sheep and causes them to pass beneath his staff, so dost Thou pass and record, count and visit, every living soul, appointing the measure of every creature's life and decreeing its destiny.

B’rosh Hashanah (Cantor: Mendelson)
Traditional Chant
(final refrain: Louis Lewandowski)

On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.
How many shall die and how many shall be born; who shall live and who shall die; who shall attain the measure of man's days and who shall not attain it.

On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.
Who shall perish by fire, and who by water, who by sword and who by beast, who by hunger, who by thirst, who by earthquake.

On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.
Who by plague and who by strangling and who by stoning.

On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.
Who shall have rest and who shall go wandering; who shall be tranquil and who shall be disturbed.

On Rosh Hashanah it is written, and on Yom Kippur it is sealed.
Who shall be at ease and who shall be afflicted; who shall become poor and who shall wax rich; who shall be brought low and who shall be exalted.

But repentance, prayer and righteousness avert the severe decree.
Oleinu (Cantor: Mendelson)
Wolf Shestapol (c.1832-1872)

Wolf Shestapol was born in Skvira, southwest of Kiev. He sang at the age of eight as a chorister in his father’s choir in Odessa and later with Bezalel Schulsinger. At the age of twelve he was already composing synagogue music. Among the cantors of his day he was considered unusual in that he was able to read music fluently. In 1848 he was appointed permanent cantor to the Kherson community where he established a synagogue musical service according to Chor-Schul (choir-synagogue) practices. Shestapol felt the need to further his musical and cantorial knowledge and was sent, with the support of the Kherson community, to Salomon Sulzer in Vienna to study the music and practice of the modern Chor-Schul. He later returned to Kherson, where his musical creations and service became a model for almost all congregations in Russia. A prolific composer, Shestapol left a great number of compositions in manuscript form, which have subsequently been edited and published in modern collections. His settings, such as the Kaddish for the High Holy Days and the Oleinu, are sung throughout the world. The Oleinu, like the Kol Nidre, is considered a Minchah melody.

Let us adore the Lord of all, who formed the world from of old, that He hath not made us like unto the heathens, nor fashioned us like the godless; that He hath not made our destiny as theirs, nor cast our lot with their multitude.

We bend the knee, bow in worship, and give thanks unto the King of Kings, the Holy One, blessed be He.

V'hakohanim (Cantor: Mendelson)
Traditional, arr. by Boruch Schorr (1823-1904)

Boruch Schorr (1823-1904) was chief Cantor of the Great Synagogue of his native city, Lemberg (Lvov). Schorr first attracted attention when he sang at Hassidic gatherings as a child. After a career as a boy soprano, Schorr began his work as a cantor in Khotin, Bessarabia and subsequently held positions in Kamenets Podolski, Iasi, Budapest, Lemberg and New York.

An incident from Schorr’s life illustrates the tensions between the secular and religious life felt by many Jewish musicians of Schorr’s generation. Schorr, a versatile composer, wrote an operetta, Samson, which was performed in 1890 at a Yiddish theater in Lemberg. At the curtain call he was brought to the stage to take a bow with the leading soprano. When the religious community heard of such undignified conduct, he was immediately suspended from his office for four weeks. Offended by this decision, Schorr left for New York City where he served at the Attorney Street Synagogue for five years. Longing for Schorr’s cantorial improvisations and choral compositions, the Lemberg community begged him to return. In 1896, he resumed his post in Lemberg and remained there until he died in 1904 while officiating at a service on the last day of Passover. Schorr is best known for his collection of sacred compositions, N'ginoth Boruch Schorr, edited by his son Israel Schorr in 1906, reissued in 1928.

Even as the High Priest first confessed his own sins and prayed for himself and his household, so let us first consider our own individual conduct during the past year. Let us begin by purging our own hearts of impurity and deception, and by cleansing our own homes of that
which sullies their beauty and mars their sanctity. May each hearthstone be a sanctuary in which the lamp of faith and religion will glow and reflect in the lives of our children, the love of Thee and Thy Torah.

Ki Anu Amecho (Cantor: Mendelson)
Traditional, arr. by Elliot Z. Levine

Elliot Z. Levine has sung with The Western Wind since its inception in 1969. His arrangements and compositions have been featured on several Western Wind recordings including The Chanukkah Story, The Passover Story and Mazal Bueno: A Portrait in Song of the Spanish Jews. His arrangements for The Birthday of the World were especially commissioned for this project. He has had many works performed by choruses and solo artists around the country. His works have been published by Harold Flammer, E. Henry David, Willis Music, Plymouth Music and Shadow Press. Mr. Levine is a native of Queens, New York.

For we are Thy people and Thou art our God;
We are Thy children, and Thou art our Father;
We are Thy servants, and Thou art our Master;
We are Thy congregation, and Thou art our Portion.
We are Thine inheritance and Thou art our Lot;
We are Thy flock, and Thou art our Shepherd.
We are Thy vineyard, and Thou art our Keeper;
We are Thy work, and Thou art our Creator.
We are Thy faithful, and Thou art our Beloved;
We are Thy loyal ones, and Thou art our Lord.

We are Thy subjects, and Thou art our King.
We are Thy devoted people, and Thou art our exalted God.

Sh'ma No (Cantor: Gurney)
Solo Quartet: Clark, Zukof, Evans, Levine
Traditional Melody, arr. by
David Nowakowsky (1848-1921)

Ono El No (Cantor: Mendelson)
Solo Quartet: Callahan, Zukof, Steinberger, Levine
Traditional Melody, arr. by Nowakowsky (1848-1921)

David Nowakowsky was born in Malin, a small village near Kiev, Russia. He sang as chorister for ten years at the Chor-Schul in Berdichev, and during this period he studied harmony, counterpoint, and composition.

In 1870 he was appointed choirmaster and associate Cantor of the Odessa Synagogue, known as the Broder-Schul. Serving in Odessa for a half-century under Cantors Nissan Blumenthal and then Pinchos Minkowsky, Nowakowsky established his reputation in Russia and throughout Europe. Nowakowsky's career developed slowly because of a personality clash with Cantor Blumenthal. But after Blumenthal retired in 1891 and was replaced by Minkowsky, Nowakowsky began to bloom as a conductor and composer. The Nowakowsky-Minkowsky team made the Broder-Schul famous for musical refinement and drew musicians and dignitaries from all over Europe. In addition to his synagogue duties Nowakowsky served for more than thirty years as
musical director of the Odessa Orphan Asylum and taught music at various schools. He is known today for his choral compositions, many of which still remain in manuscript form. Those in print are Shire David—Kabbalath Shabbat and Shire David—Tefilot Neilah (1895) from which Sh’má No and Ono El No are drawn.

Sh’má No
Hearken, we implore Thee; this day, forgive us, for lo! the day waneth, and we turn to Thee, O Thou who art awe-inspiring, revered and holy.

Ono El No
We beseech Thee, O God, forgive, pardon, condone; have pity and compassion; grant us atonement, and subdue our sin and iniquity.

Chatanu L’fanecha (Cantor: Mizrahi)
Traditional Sephardic

In the Sephardic tradition, Selihot (penitential services) take place during the entire month of Elul, the month before Rosh Hashanah. Chatanu L’fanecha is sung at various times during these services and at several points during the Yom Kippur service. The entire congregation joins in on the refrain of this memorable Middle Eastern tune that is growing more and more popular in Western Sephardic congregations.

Merciful and gracious God, we have sinned before Thee; have mercy on us.

Awesome God, kind and good to all Thy creatures,
clothed in right, proclaiming truth,
God, we have sinned before Thee, have mercy on us.

Constant in comforts, all knowing, glorious in wonders, hearkening to prayers,
God, we have sinned before Thee, have mercy on us.

Searcher of inmost feelings, tester of hearts, uncoverer of depths, venerated in praises, working salvation,
God, we have sinned before Thee, have mercy on us.

Avinu Malkeinu (Cantor: Mizrahi)
Traditional, arr. by Elliot Z. Levine

Our Father, our King, be Thou gracious unto us and answer us; for lo, we are unworthy; deal Thou with us in charity and loving-kindness and save us.

Program Notes by
William Zukof and Marsha Bryan Edelman
Produced by Mark Johnson

Recording, mixing, digital editing: Ted Spencer

Tracks produced by William Zukof and Mark Johnson

Recorded at The West End Theater, 263 West 86th Street in New York City

Executive Producer: William Zukof

Shofar: Albert Tamayer
(Albert Tamayer is a native of Bukhara, Uzbekistan, a former republic of the U.S.S.R. His family emigrated to the United States in 1989. He was given the opportunity to learn to blow the Shofar at Temple Emanuel in Borough Park, Brooklyn, New York, where Albert celebrated becoming a Bar Mitzvah at age 14.)

This recording is dedicated to the memory of Esther Gologor, born 1909 in Jerusalem, died 1995, New York City, whose love of Jewish music inspired us all.

Design: Harriet R. Goren

For CD players with index capability, additional songs within a track can be accessed by using index numbers 2 or 3.
Special thanks to:

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Celia Zukof
The Birthday of the World
Music and Traditions of the High Holy Days
Part II: Yom Kippur

Sung by The Western Wind
Narrated by Leonard Nimoy
Matthew Lazar, Guest Conductor

Narration written by Rabbi Gerald C. Skolnik
Cantors: Alberto Mizrahi, Faith Steinsnyder Gurney,
Charles Osborne, Jacob Mendelson,

The Western Wind:
Phyllis Elaine Clark, Mary Ellen Callahan, sopranos
William Zukof, countertenor
Timothy Leigh Evans, Michael Steinberger, tenors
Elliot Z. Levine, baritone
with
Wilbur Pauley, bass. Alexandra Montano, mezzo-soprano

Chorus: Rachel Rosales, Susan Montgomery, sopranos
Kathy J. Barr, Phyllis Jo Kubey, altos
Stephen Rosser, tenor. Frank Barr, Mark Duer, basses

Producer: Mark Johnson
Executive Producer: William Zukof

To listen to just the music, program the even-numbered tracks. Total: 73:33