

Lento religioso

CANTOR

Quasi recitativo molto espressivo

HEBREW

Kol nid-te Le-ne
Kol nid-te Kol nid-te

Soft Strings 8'

Sounds of Our Faith:

The Music of Congregation Emanu-El

el a-sher he-moh-nod-rim le-cho o-
me v'ko-no me v'chi-no-ye v'ki-no se ush

A SPECIAL EXHIBIT IN CELEBRATION OF

CONGREGATION EMANU-EL'S 150TH ANNIVERSARY

ff ad libitum

no Be-nos-som e-ne-hem e le-cho
us Din-dai no a

mf

roll.

yash v. us-sha-ma yim, no. a-

Sounds of Our Faith opens a window onto one hundred and fifty years of unsurpassed cantorial leadership, important commissioned Jewish music, great performances, and dedicated patronage at Congregation Emanu-El. Indeed, musical expression has been at the heart of Emanu-El's religious and cultural life since the Gold Rush. Today's programs remain rooted in this rich tradition, reflecting a variety of forms and influences that range from the sacred to the secular and encompass everything from biblical chants and contemporary Israeli compositions to jazz, folk and classical music. But the true focus of *Sounds of Our Faith* is the remarkable symphony of people—cantors, composers and musicians—who influenced the course of Emanu-El's musical development, creating traditions and building a repertoire commissioned from some of the most prominent composers of the twentieth century.

A PIONEER CANTORATE:

CONGREGATION EMANU-EL'S FIRST DECADE

The early years of Congregation Emanu-El's growth proved fruitful if somewhat tempestuous. Yet, from primitive beginnings in a rented tent to the solid neo-gothic presence of the Broadway Street Temple, the Congregation continued to progress. A scarcity of ordained cantors made hiring a "hazan" for the rapidly growing but still pioneer Congregation Emanu-El a particular challenge. Fortunately, competent and dedicated, if not always trained and ordained, candidates did emerge.

Wanted!

BY THE CONGREGATION EMANU-EL
OF SAN FRANCISCO, CAL.

A CHASAN AND BAL KORAH.

HE MUST POSSESS A GOOD VOICE, & Thorough Knowledge of Music and the Hebrew Language, and be able to Instruct and Lead the Choir. He will be elected for the term of three years, at a salary of \$2,500 per annum. None need apply unless able to furnish satisfactory references in regard to character and the above named capacities. Applications, with testimonials, are to be forwarded to the President of the Congregation, L. Sachs, Esq.

N. B.—If the Chasan elected be a competent teacher in Hebrew and religion, it will be to his great advantage, as he is likely to be engaged as such for the Religious School of the Congregation, with an extra compensation.

B. MAGAN, Secretary.
San Francisco, Jan. 29, 1854. Judd St.

In 1851, the year of Congregation Emanu-El's official incorporation, a "Hazan" Welhof was appointed Reader and Minister at "a modest salary." According to Jacob Voorsanger, Welhof remained loyally committed, serving intermittently until 1856. Throughout Welhof's tenure, the Congregation continued its search for a permanent, trained cantor. In 1853 a special meeting of the Congregation resolved "That this Congregation deems it necessary for its own prosperity, and is desirous of engaging a Minister, Hazan and Teacher as early as possible"—an important concern, as plans were under way for construction of the Congregation's first permanent synagogue. A cantor was not found however, and in 1854 the Congregation was again advertising. At the consecration of the Broadway temple on September 14, 1854, Rabbi Julius Eckman officiated with the services of a choir, but not, it seems, a cantor and in October Eckman was

elected as Emanu-El's first "Minister and Reader." Regrettably, differences over religious practice led to his premature resignation in 1855 and Hazan Welhof resumed his former position. In 1856 Daniel Levy, the Congregation's teacher—and a highly educated man with a beautiful singing voice but no cantorial training—assumed the role of Reader. Not until 1864, with the appointment of Alexander Weisler, would Congregation Emanu-El finally find its first fully qualified cantor.

DANIEL LEVY (CANTOR, 1857–1864)

Daniel Levy received his diploma as a professor of languages from Paris University. Prior to coming to the United States in 1856, he served as the Principal of Public Schools for Jewish Boys in Algeria for six years. On April 12, 1856, Congregation Emanu-El elected Levy teacher of its Hebrew and religious school, for which he established a day school in the basement of the new Broadway synagogue. In 1857 the Congregation also appointed him Reader, or Cantor, despite his lack of cantorial training. He even officiated as Rabbi on several occasions when the pulpit was vacant. Levy was also the first Cantor of Congregation Emanu-El to preside over a permanently organized choir and the first to make the controversial move of introducing an organ into services. He continued as Emanu-El's cantor until 1864. Levy coupled his love for Judaism with an enthusiasm for his French roots. During his years in San Francisco he served as president of the French Hospital, the Alliance Francaise and the French League; he also received the Cross of the Legion of Honor from the French government.



ALEXANDER WEISLER (CANTOR, 1864–1874)

Following Daniel Levy's resignation in 1864, Alexander Weisler, a student of the great German Cantor Solomon Sulzer, assumed the role of Cantor for Congregation Emanu-El. It was Weisler who ushered the Congregation into its splendid new home on Sutter Street by assembling a twenty-six person choir and performing Mendelssohn's *Hymn of Praise* at the dedication. A report in the San Francisco newspaper *The Alta* lauded, "...this gentleman's chanting and reading of the Hebrew are faultless, for he combines with a sympathetic baritone voice [an] excellent musical school, and could rank [among] most of those who aim for musical honors in more worldly professions." Weisler served Congregation Emanu-El for just over ten years, resigning in 1874 in order to return to Europe.



MAX WOLFF (CANTOR, 1874–1884)

Max Wolff was born in Carlsruhe, Germany. A graduate of the Vienna Conservatory, he abandoned a promising operatic career in deference to his father's objections and embarked instead upon a calling in the cantorate. He soon accepted the position of Cantor to the Congregation of Mannheim, remaining there for five years. When, in June of 1874, Congregation Emanu-El began its search for a Cantor to replace the retired Alexander Weisler, a committee of three members—former Temple President Henry Seligman (then living abroad), Isaac Wormser and A. Wasserman (both travelling in Europe)—heard Wolff and strongly recommended his appointment. Indeed, Wolff was the overwhelming choice from a field of over two dozen candidates. Highly regarded for his tremendous baritone voice, Wolff's tenure in San Francisco proved popular but regrettably brief. In 1882 illness greatly impacted his ability to serve and, in 1884, he passed away. Wolff's premature death left the Congregation without an official Cantor until the arrival, in 1893, of Edward J. Stark.



EDWARD J. STARK (CANTOR 1893–1913)

Edward J. Stark's father was a cantor of some renown in Austria and it was with his father that Stark studied Hebrew and *hazanut* before preparing for the cantorate in Vienna and Leipzig. He accepted his first cantorial position at Congregation Beth Elohim in Brooklyn in 1891. Two years later he and his family (wife Rosa and three children) moved to San Francisco where, in 1893, he began serving as cantor of Congregation Emanu-El.



With the introduction of choirs, organs and other modern reforms, Congregation Emanu-El had moved far from traditional Jewish orthodoxy by the 1890s. In 1895 Emanu-El adopted the *Union Prayer Book*, but Stark did not believe that the music associated with it was inspirational or reflected contemporary congregational needs. As a result, he set out to compose what would prove his masterpiece:

the *Sefer Anim Zemiroth*, a complete musical accompaniment to the *Union Prayer Book*. Published in 1906, it became the basis for Reform services in the United States.

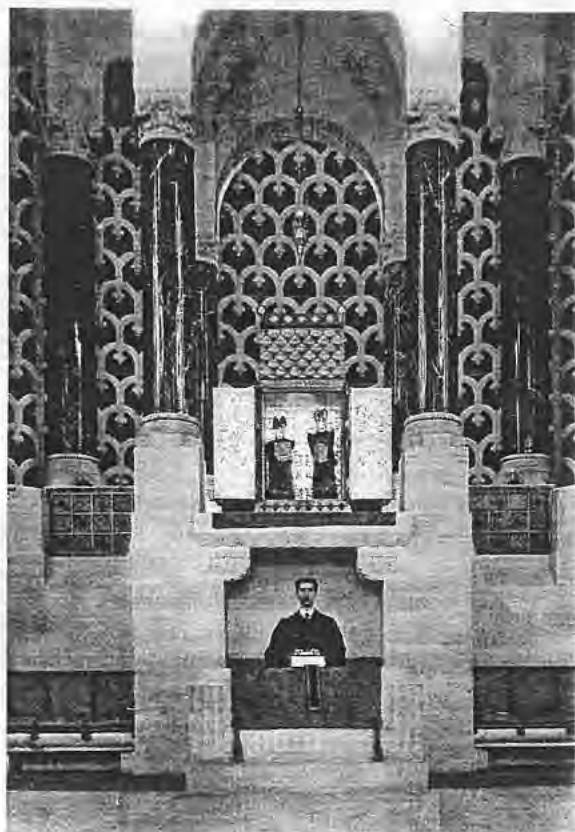
Extremely popular with the Congregation, Stark was a fine singer with a clear, fresh and powerful baritone voice. He wrote hymns for Sabbath School children, cantorial

recitatives, and compositions for choir and organ. In 1900 the Congregation published his *Services for Children* (a musical accompaniment to services written by Rabbi Jacob Voorsanger). Also in 1900, the Congregation celebrated its Fiftieth Anniversary with a service prepared by Cantor Stark. In addition, he managed to compose and direct two three-act operettas for Temple Emanu-El's Sabbath School: *The Merry Company* for Hanukah in 1895 and *The Maid of Shushan* or *Esther the Queen*, performed at the Columbia Theatre in honor of Purim in 1906. In failing health, Cantor Stark retired and was named Cantor Emeritus by the Congregation in 1913.

REUBEN R. RINDER (CANTOR, 1913–1959)

Cantor Rinder was born in 1887 near Lemberg in Galicia. In 1900 he came to New York and attended the Hebrew Theological Seminary. His first cantorial appointment was with a small Brooklyn "shul," but four years later he became Cantor at B'nai Jeshurun, a large Conservative synagogue in Manhattan. Cantor Rinder sometimes sang at services conducted by Rabbi Stephen Wise at Carnegie Hall and it was Wise who recommended Rinder to Temple Emanu-El's Rabbi Martin A. Meyer. In 1913, at the age of twenty-six, Rinder arrived in San Francisco to assume the role of Cantor to Congregation Emanu-El. His tenure here would prove long, fruitful and enduring, for the events he initiated and the music he both composed and commissioned continue to enrich us today.

In 1922 Cantor Rinder inaugurated the annual custom of holding musical events at Temple. Performances of Handel's *Judas Maccabaeus*, *Israel in Egypt* and *Esther*; Mendelssohn's *Elijah*, *Athalie* and *Hymn of Praise*; and Gaul's *Ruth* were given free of charge to the public. These concerts were often performed by musicians from the San Francisco Symphony



and a chorus, directed by Rinder, composed of voices from the Emanu-El Choir, Stanford University, the University of California, and San Francisco State. Cantor Rinder's enduring interest in promoting new Jewish music resulted in his founding the Society for the Advancement of Synagogue Music in 1927. His desire to introduce more Jewish music into synagogue services resulted in both the commissioning of Jewish composers and in works, especially hymns, of his own composition. He also set to music the three-fold *Benediction* at the close of the Reform service. In addition, Rinder's 1925 arrangement of the *Kol Nidre* chant was adopted by several hundred American congregations for the Eve of Atonement Service and, in September 1927, was broadcast around the world via radio and short wave. Upon Rinder's retirement as cantor from Temple Emanu-El, the Board of Directors named him "Cantor for Life." He passed away in 1965.

CANTOR RINDER AND THE COMMISSIONING OF SACRED MUSIC

Cantor Rinder's enthusiasm for new Jewish music proved especially beneficial to Temple Emanu-El. In 1930 he commissioned Ernest Bloch, then Director of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, to compose a Sacred Service for the Congregation. Rinder raised the funds for this endeavor from interested San Francisco families and Bloch returned to his home in Switzerland to compose his *Avodath Hakodesh*, sharing with Rinder the creation pains of this heart-felt Jewish service. Upon its premiere at Temple Emanu-El in 1933, Bloch wrote to Rinder, "You are the Godfather of this work."

The next major commission came in 1948 when, over Seder dinner at the Rinder home, Rinder suggested to Darius Milhaud that he compose a Sacred Sabbath service. On May 18, 1949, Milhaud conducted the premier of his *Sacred Service* at Temple Emanu-El. It was performed with a 150-member chorus and members of the San Francisco Symphony; Cantor Rinder recited the prayers accompanying the musical background. Milhaud's *Sacred Service* is dedicated to Mrs. E.S. Heller who was also present at that nascent Seder in 1948.

In 1953 Cantor Rinder and his wife Rowie were offered a trip to Israel in celebration of his 40th anniversary with Temple Emanu-El. While there, Rinder met composer Marc Lavry, who was then



Composer Marc Lavry with
Cantor Reuben Rinder, 1955

Musical Director of the Israeli Broadcasting Station. It proved a fruitful meeting, for two years later Lavry's *Sabbath Service* premiered as the newest commission from Temple Emanu-El, marking the Congregation's 105th anniversary. Lavry himself conducted the concert, presented on March 11, 1955.

Cantor Rinder's musical involvement with Temple Emanu-El did not end with his retirement in 1959. In 1962, again in Israel, he commissioned Paul Ben-Haim to compose the music for three Psalms, the 4th, 23rd and 147th. *Three Psalms* premiered in 1963, in honor of Cantor Rinder's 50th anniversary with Temple Emanu-El.

JOSEPH PORTNOY (CANTOR, 1959–1987)

Cantor Joseph Portnoy received his Bachelor of Arts degree from the College of William and Mary and Master of Arts degree from the University of Virginia before graduating from the Hebrew Union Jewish Institute of Religion in New York in 1951. He earned his Doctorate at New York University and gained his musical training at the Julliard School of Music.



Cantor Portnoy was appointed cantor of Congregation Emanu-El in 1959, a position he performed with distinction for nearly thirty years until his retirement as Cantor Emeritus in 1987. In addition, he also became Director of Religious Education in 1964. As such, he created two enduring publications. *From Sinai's Heights*, a book of children's songs, and *Music Curriculum for the Religious School* were published by the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. A strong advocate of new Jewish sacred music, Cantor Portnoy was instrumental in commissioning the following compositions for Temple Emanu-El: *Sacred Service* by Sergiu Natra; *Sacred Cantata* by Seymour Shifrin; *Liturgy for High Holiday* by Bonia Schur; and *The Trial of Anatoly Scharansky* by Charles Davidson.

In addition to his cantorial accomplishments, Cantor Portnoy is also a gifted sculptor.

ROSLYN BARAK (CANTOR, 1987–PRESENT)

Cantor Barak was born and raised in New York City where she attended the High School of Music and Art and the Manhattan School of Music. While still in college she made her Carnegie Hall debut with the Youth Symphony Orchestra of New York, having won their competition for soprano soloist. Other awards received include the Liederkrantz Award and the Minna Kaufmann Ruud Foundation prize, as well as a Katherine Long scholarship of the Metropolitan Opera Studio. She appeared with many local New York opera companies and orchestras and also apprenticed for two summers with the Santa Fe Opera Company.



In 1974 Barak received a contract with the Israel National Opera and remained in that country for three years. She appeared with the Israel Philharmonic in a concert performance of *Die Zauberflöte* as well as with the Jerusalem Symphony, the Israel Chamber Orchestra, and the Beersheva Orchestra. She also performed for Leonard Bernstein in a concert of his vocal music. After returning to the United States in 1977 Barak began singing in synagogues and, in 1982, decided upon a career in the cantorate. She received her Masters degree in Sacred Music from the Hebrew Union College-School of Sacred Music in 1986.

Temple Emanu-El has enjoyed Cantor Barak's cantorial leadership and beautiful voice since 1987. During her tenure she has contributed to the Congregation's tradition of sponsoring new sacred music by commissioning such works as *Hallel* by David Schiff, *Avodat HaKodesh*, by Ben Steinberg, and *Consolations of Israel and Birth is a Beginning* by Aminadov Aloni. Cantor Barak continues to perform with orchestras and makes regular appearances as a recitalist and lecturer in San Francisco, throughout the United States and in Europe. Her first major CD, *The Jewish Soul*, was released in 1996.

THE EMANU-EL ORGANS

Today the presence of an organ in our sanctuaries seems perfectly natural. But when a "melodeon" was first introduced into the Congregation's services as an accompaniment to the choir in 1857, it marked a significant and progressive move away from traditional Jewish ritual. By the time the Sutter Street Temple was completed in 1866, the incorporation of an organ—installed prominently above the altar—was a well-accepted feature of the Congregation's Reform practice. It even sounded the opening note for that Temple's dedicatory service. No longer a break from tradition, the organ is now an enduring feature of Congregation Emanu-El's musical heritage, celebrated in services, recitals, dedicated compositions, and orchestral concerts. Indeed, today's congregants enjoy the presence of an organ in each of Temple Emanu-El's three sanctuaries.

WALLACE ARTHUR SABIN (ORGANIST, c. 1900–1938)

Wallace Arthur Sabin was an organist, conductor and composer whose musicianship enhanced San Francisco's musical and religious communities for over fifty years. In a memorial tribute delivered at San Francisco's Grace Cathedral on January 23, 1938, Cantor Reuben R. Rinder described Sabin as "both an artist and a religionist" whose art "was a manifestation of the religious instinct,—an expression of an emotion felt for that which is the essence of all."

Sabin received his musical training at the Royal College of Organists in London as well as Magdalen College and Queens College, Oxford. Although equally proficient in the arts of choral conducting, composing and teaching, it was Sabin's expertise with the organ which gained him particular renown. As Rinder commented, "It was this instrument which he loved best. He played it with masterly technique and precision, with an unerring instinct for sheer beauty of tonal color. To him music was more than a profession; it was the sustenance of the spirit."

TRIBUTE TO
WALLACE ARTHUR SABIN
by
REUBEN R. RINDER
on the occasion of
THE MEMORIAL SERVICES
held at
GRACE CATHEDRAL
San Francisco
January twenty-third
Nineteen hundred and thirty-eight



LUDWIG ALTMAN (ORGANIST, 1937–1986)

Born in Breslau, Germany in 1910, Ludwig Altman received his musical education at the State Academy for Sacred Music in Berlin. His outstanding talent led to an appointment, at the age of only twenty-three, as organist for the largest synagogue in Germany—Berlin's Neue Synagogue on Oranienburgerstrasse, a position he held until 1936 when increasing anti-Semitism forced his emigration to the United States. Upon arriving in San Francisco in February 1937, Altman's skills as an organist, pianist, music editor, scholar, and composer soon gained him recognition as a superior and versatile musician. Following Wallace Sabin's death in 1937, Cantor Rinder appointed Altman organist and choir director of Temple Emanu-El, a beginning that continued to enrich the Congregation for the next half century.



Altman also served as organist for the San Francisco Symphony Orchestra (appointed by Pierre Monteux) and as staff organist for the California Legion of Honor. He performed as a soloist with the San Francisco Symphony as well. But Altman's renown extended far beyond San Francisco, and his summer concert tours in Europe brought international acclaim. His friends and colleagues numbered Yehudi Menuhin, Darius Milhaud, Isaac Stern, Roger Sessions, Leon Fleisher, and Thomas Mann.

Altman gained distinction as a scholar, composer and advocate of new music. He edited and published first editions of previously unknown organ music by Beethoven, Bach, Mendelssohn, and Telemann; composed such notable works as *The Blessing of Moses* (dedicated to Rabbi Joseph Asher) and *The Beloved of the Lord* (dedicated to Cantor Joseph Portnoy); and commissioned the following compositions for Temple Emanu-El: *Elegiac Sonorities for Organ* by David Scheinfeld, *Prelude and Fantasia for Organ* by Karl Kohn, *Three Chorale Variations* by Ellis Kohs, and *Fantasy on Kol Nidre for Organ*, by Herbert Fromm.

In 1969 Altman was awarded the Isador Freed First Prize for Choral Work and an honorary Doctor of Music degree from the University of San Francisco in 1982. He retired as organist for Congregation Emanu-El in 1986 and passed away, at the age of eighty, in 1990.

CHARLES RUS (ORGANIST, c. 1990–PRESENT)

In addition to his duties with Congregation Emanu-El, Charles Rus is a Professor of Organ at the San Francisco Conservatory of Music. A native of Grand Rapids, Michigan, Rus has performed throughout the United States and Europe. He is also a regular performer with the San Francisco Symphony and has toured Europe, Asia and the United States with them. Mr. Rus began his involvement with the organ by apprenticing with George Bozeman Organbuilders in Deerfield, New Hampshire. After receiving degrees from the Eastman School of Music and the University of Michigan, he was a Fulbright Scholar at the Folkwang Hochschule für Musik in Essen, Germany. In addition to his demanding performance schedule, Rus also builds and voices organ pipes.



THE EMANU-EL CHOIR

When Congregation Emanu-El's first volunteer choir—composed of men and women—was organized by A. Goddchaux in 1858, the incorporation of choral singing into Jewish services was a new, controversial and largely Reform innovation. The music performed came primarily from Sulzer, Rubin and the other great 19th century cantors of Germany.

Today the presence of a choir is an integral, highly regarded feature of Temple Emanu-El's spiritual life. The choral music performed ranges from traditional to contemporary, and the Congregation enjoys the services of three choirs. Kol Emanu-El (Voice of Emanu-El) is an all volunteer choir composed of dedicated Temple members who sing at Friday night Shabbat services as well as in special programs both at Temple and in the community. The Emanu-El Professional Choir, whose members have included such renowned voices as Stanley Noonan, Donna Peterson, Marian Marsh, and Paul Walti, performs at Saturday morning Sabbath and High Holiday services. The Congregation's third choir, Shir Emanu-El (Song of Emanu-El), is a delightful revival of a former Emanu-El tradition: a children's choir. Re-established by Cantor Barak in 1999, Shir Emanu-El recently performed *L'Maseh V'reisheet—To Recreate the World*, a special service in honor of the millennium designed to be sung by children conducted by their cantors. *L'Maseh V'reisheet* was co-commissioned by forty congregations, including Emanu-El, from synagogue composer Michael Isaacson.



Cantor Reuben Rinder and the Children's Choir, about 1945

to Religioso.

Peace, fair ra-diant peace be come, To na-tions far and
his day of thanks Thy child-ren greet, O'er land and sea, O

C.

nigh; The clash of arms, the trum pet shrill, Havn
Lord; The swords to plow-shares we shall beat, And

ceased to shake the sky. With joy-ful hearts, with
na-tions war no more. Re-joice, O peo-ple,